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I Found Something In The Woods Somewhere: Narrative, Heterotemporality, And The Timber Industry In The Great Smoky Mountains

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I Found Something in the Woods Somewhere: Narrative, Heterotemporality, and the
Timber Industry in the Great Smoky Mountains

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A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty of The College of William & Mary in
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Master of Arts

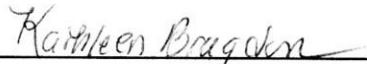


Elizabeth Claire Albee

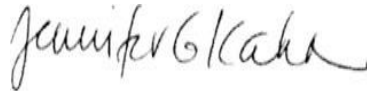
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ABSTRACT

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park has been prized as an area of unmatched biodiversity in the Eastern United States. However, the presentation of the Park as an unpeopled, pristine wilderness does not acknowledge that the Park is a heterogeneous space where nature and culture are entangled. Recognizing and remembering the region's cultural history is vital to understanding the Smoky Mountains in the past and present. The archaeology of the 20th-century timber industry is largely forgotten within the context of the National Park today, though the industry and its associated artifacts contradict popular myths about Appalachia. In 2019, I recorded the physical remains of Little River Lumber Company activity through survey and connected these vestiges to local histories and archival documents. By considering the timber industry's impacts on the National Park as we know it today through historical archaeology, we can examine the industry's role in broader interpretations of Appalachia.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Great Smoky Mountains

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most visited national park in the United States, recording over 12 million recreational visitors in 2019 (NPS 2019: “Recreation Visitors”). The park is an 800-square mile island of temperate highland forest on the Tennessee-North Carolina border, three hours by car from Atlanta, Georgia, and seven hours from Washington, DC. In North Carolina, the Park’s entrance is bordered by the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians reservation. In Tennessee, the main way to get into the Park is by passing through a trio of towns – Sevierville, Pigeon Forge, and Gatlinburg – which one author dubbed “the ugliest stretch of road in North America” (Camuto 2000: 4). The Tennessee side of the park is perpetually clogged with traffic, lit by neon at night, and has been under construction since the 1980s. The hyper-development of the towns leading up to the entrance of the National Park means that crossing the border into the park can be a startling experience as one shifts from a very human space to a very natural space.

Even though it is surrounded by increasingly developed land, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is one of the most biodiverse areas of the nation. It contains over 3,500 plant species representing an unmatched diversity of flora, 130 natural species of trees, and “possibly the greatest diversity of salamanders in the world” (International Union for Conservation of Nature 1982). The National Park has immense biological and ecological importance. Because of its significance in these realms, it is often presented to and perceived by visitors as a pristine wilderness. Showcasing the Park’s ecological significance is important, especially as it concerns conservation and current issues and questions surrounding the environment, climate

change, and the purpose of public lands. As the Trump administration rolls back “numerous environmental regulations, deeming them burdensome for business” and the issue of climate change is still debated by politicians (Superville 2019: “Public Lands”), places like the Smokies, where 95% of the land is forested, are becoming increasingly rare and increasingly endangered. In some places, the National Park Service stands between continued environmental exploitation and the preservation of the natural resources of the United States. The National Park Service (NPS) was, after all, founded to “conserve the scenery . . . [and to] leave [it] unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations” (64th US Congress 1916), therefore maintaining the forest that covers the Smoky Mountains is important to NPS’s mission. In the case of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GRSM), the campaign to create the park was started by people who wondered why a wilderness area on par with Yellowstone and Yosemite did not exist in the Eastern United States (Frome 1966: 182), where forested land was rapidly disappearing due to industrialization and urbanization.

While the NPS has succeeded at preserving some of the old-growth forest in the GRSM, much of the forest as seen by 21st-century visitors is reconstructed. While 23% of the Park is old-growth, the rest of the area was clear-cut in the early 20th century. A lot of hard work and money has gone into recreating a wilderness to preserve the natural heritage of the Smokies and to attract visitors to the region (see Campbell 1960). This push, first from park boosters, then the NPS and the tourism industry in East Tennessee, resulted in the intentional forgetting of much of the Park’s cultural history, demonstrated by the removal of most of the physical

reminders of human occupation and use such as buildings and railroads from the landscape by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s. This intentional forgetting has silenced the voices of the mountaineers of the 20th century and their descendants, subjecting them to a top-down narrative that portrays the people who live in and around the Appalachians as backward people opposed to notions of modernity, best exemplified in the pop-culture caricature of the hillbilly. While people from around the Smoky Mountains play with this image in touristic expressions, the character of the hillbilly is rarely seriously challenged. NPS perpetuates this image by grounding presentation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park as a wilderness that has not seen human alteration of the natural landscape since before the Civil War.

The presentation of the Park as an unpeopled, pristine wilderness does not acknowledge the extensive human modification of the landscape that has occurred over centuries. When human history is acknowledged, it is usually separated from interpretations of the Smokies' natural history, both literally and metaphorically. A more realistic take on the Park recognizes it as a heterogeneous space where nature and culture are not separate but entangled. Acknowledging the region's cultural history is vital to understanding the Smoky Mountains in the past and present. To conceive of the Smokies as a landscape through its place in human imagination points to the relationship between nature and culture and challenges this dichotomy which is often ignored in constructions of "wilderness" and acknowledges the inherent and diachronic tensions between local communities and outsiders in the context of the Park.

The act of intentional forgetting in the GRSM has created a stark divide between local and non-local views of the Smokies. Locals tend to appreciate the landscape as a multivalent one where the region's cultural history has played an important role in shaping the landscape through time. In this thesis, I discuss the existence of a notion of local rootedness in the area which is manifested in the continued habitation of the region by families who initially arrived in the first two decades of the 19th century and continued interest in their heritage and history. In a 1992 paper, Liisa Malkki discusses the "ecological immobility of the native" wherein people are rooted to a place through their history yet detached from the land (Malkki 1992: 29). While comparatively few locals in Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg make their livings from subsistence agriculture in the 21st century, rootedness in place remains a vital part of local identities. Rootedness is then expressed through familiarity with the landscape and knowledge that is separate from the National Park Service's body of knowledge about the GRSM.

NPS knowledge of the landscape – and, therefore, tourist knowledge of the landscape – focuses primarily on a simpler interpretation that reflects NPS's interest in the natural environment and tourists' assumptions and desires pertaining to the landscape. This is an idea evident in early tourism literature, wherein the movement to establish the park was built around outsiders becoming appalled at the state of the region and advocating to protect the region from industry (Brown 2000: 81). The popularity of the Park as a tourist destination to reconnect with nature through viewing waterfalls and admiring vistas was present at the genesis of the Park and this specific view of nature is pushed for the tourists and accepted wholeheartedly by

the tourists themselves. This is common to interpretations for the public, as it seems the visiting public at large is presumed to be more interested in the “adventure” aspect of the Park than its history. As such, nature is emphasized while culture falls to the wayside.

In NPS interpretation, the separation of nature and culture can be easy to see. For example, there are two main entrances to the GRSM and a visitors’ center associated with each: Sugarlands on the Tennessee side, near Gatlinburg, and Oconaluftee in North Carolina, near Cherokee. The bulk of the annual visitors to the park pass through one of these two entrances. July is peak season in the Park, and in 2019, NPS recorded 1.6 million visitors. Over half a million of those visitors came through the Gatlinburg entrance to the park compared with 316,000 visitors through Oconaluftee (NPS 2019: “Year to Date”). By the end of the calendar year 2019, the total number of visitors recorded as passing through Gatlinburg was a little over four million while Oconaluftee saw half as many visitors (NPS 2019: “Monthly Public Use”). This is significant because Sugarlands, which receives the bulk of GRSM visitors, likely due to its proximity to the interstate and all the other development in Gatlinburg, educates visitors on the natural history of the park. The museum displays in the visitors’ center focus on the different biomes of the Smokies and all the associated flora and fauna that can be found in the Park. Oconaluftee, in contrast, deals with the cultural history of the park. The museum in North Carolina offers visitors the opportunity to listen to recordings of mountaineers and Cherokee. The displays offer an abbreviated version of the human history of the Smokies with the bulk of the focus resting on subsistence agriculture and the CCC and the Park’s

foundation. Oconaluftee also hosts a recreation of a 19th-century mountain farm.

While one could argue that the focus on 19th-century subsistence agriculture breaks down the nature/culture divide by highlighting Euroamerican settlers' dependence on the landscape, the fact that these interpretive areas are confined to specific locations points to the continued efforts to visually and ideologically separate areas of human habitation from the rest of the Park. Additionally, the visitors' center that focuses on the natural history of the park is literally separated from the visitors' center that focuses on the people of the Smokies by a mountain range. The fact that twice as many visitors pass through Sugarlands as Oconaluftee also indicates NPS's educational interests lie more in natural history than in cultural history.

The historical interpretation at Oconaluftee Visitors' Center represents one of two main areas where NPS interprets the cultural history of the Park. The other main area of historical interpretation is at Cades Cove near Townsend, Tennessee, which also focuses on 19th-century farms and is one of the most visited areas of the Park. This period is significant to the region's history, as it is when the first white settlers came to the Smokies. It has therefore been highlighted by NPS since the Park's foundation in 1934. However, the focus on the early 19th century comes at the expense of acknowledging other equally important aspects of the Park's history. Native use and habitation go almost entirely unrecognized, and Euroamerican experiences after the Civil War are also minimized, though in recent years, NPS has begun restoration work on part of a resort known as Daisy Town. Interpretation at Cades Cove, meanwhile, frames Appalachia as a region deviant from "the American norm" resulting from perceived geographic and chronological distance from

“modernity” (Shapiro 1978: x). It and the rest of the Park remove the 21st-century visitor from the “hurried distractions of modern life” and provide access to a wilderness “your forefathers have not had the time to conquer” (Hubert Work, quoted in Gregg 2010: 108).

Such interpretations of the Park and, indeed, Appalachia at large, were the starting point for this thesis. I have spent much of my life in and around the Smokies, have watched the rapid development in East Tennessee, lost many hours to sitting in traffic in Pigeon Forge, seen development rip apart the hills that the Tennessee Valley is so famous for, and still been asked if I have access to indoor plumbing when I venture north of the Ohio River. Images of Appalachia as a wilderness inhabited by the likes of the Beverly Hillbillies, the worst of the Hatfield and McCoy stereotypes, or Dollywood are pervasive and clash with the reality of living in Southern Appalachia. I started thinking about the evolution of images of Appalachia and found myself re-directed several times to the National Park, its interpretation of Cades Cove, and the fact that the Park is more than what is presented to the millions of tourists who drive through annually. NPS interprets the Park as a place where its past is a distant past confined to a few specific areas, thus streamlining and simplifying the region’s history¹. But interpreting the Park as a heterogeneous space accounts for different experiences and narratives and challenges common

¹ Shannon Dawdy (2016) touches on the Disneyfication of New Orleans, specifically the French Quarter, following Hurricane Katrina. The simplification and marketing of Native American cultures (usually lumped together as one overarching “Indian” culture) is used to comedic effect in ["The Indian Store"](#) by comedy group The 1491s.

understandings of Appalachia beyond the wilderness narrative or the emphasis on the early 19th century. In writing this thesis, I provide a more holistic account of the region by focusing on the mountaineers through their voices and their objects rather than NPS interpretation alone or outside accounts of the region.

Mountaineers throughout Appalachia have often been silenced by a top-down narrative imposed by people from outside the region. The narrative of Appalachia was created when Europeans first encountered indigenous peoples in the mountains and justified first the seizure of lands from the Cherokee and then their expulsion. After 1838, that narrative shifted to a focus on othering the white mountaineers who had earlier othered the Cherokee. This narrative is based around class and race and attempts to create a region distinct from the rest of the United States, justify its inclusion in the rest of the nation-state, and continue outside control over the region's economy and natural resources. The creation of difference reifies power structures and allows those within the dominant culture to achieve control. It also represents how a cohesive narrative and history are necessary to nation-states. Sections of the population that deviate from that narrative – such as a region populated by hillbillies – signal the “failure and impermanency” of the nation-state itself and the systems – like capitalism, progress, and modernity – it relies on (Dawdy 2010: 772). The prevalence of top-down documents such as land records, maps, and the replacement and transformation of place names points to the silencing of local peoples – indigenous and white – by outside sources. An archaeological examination of the Smoky Mountains pushes back against this

dominant outside narrative and provides a different way of thinking about mountaineers and their experiences. This is a perspective that highlights local voices and brings them to the fore where the historical record may be lacking.

Highlighting the voices of study communities has long been a goal of archaeology and anthropology, where subaltern communities who do not hold power in society are painted in specific ways by a dominant party. Historical archaeology provides a way to navigate around that dominant narrative and better understand the complex social and cultural contexts in which people in and around the Appalachian Mountains lived. These contexts created localized societies wherein the effects of globalization are evident.

This archaeological exploration of the Smoky Mountains follows broader trends in post-processual archaeology by highlighting the voices of the subaltern and including community voices where they have otherwise been silenced through processes of nationalism, imperialism, and colonialism. Highlighting the voices of the subaltern is one way of resisting globalization and state-driven narratives. “Self-determination and sovereignty over . . . natural resources are rights that are recognized by international law” (Oliver-Smith 2010: 3). Establishing a local perspective in interpreting history through archaeology – with its power to challenge historical narratives – is important to consider when approaching public lands and the natural environment. Such interest in local voices follows theoretical approaches championed as indigenous archaeologists who magnify the perspectives of indigenous groups in changing dominant narratives. A people’s understanding of

their own past is therefore relevant to understanding and cementing current identities.

Using non-traditional sources to understand the past, such as those outlined in Charlotte Damm's 2005 article on approaching the indigenous past², can offer new approaches to the culture being studied, better align with that group's needs in terms of archaeology, and incorporate community participation into what may otherwise be a top-down approach to an existing top-down perspective.

Further, acknowledging and exploring the different ways mountaineers interacted with the landscape in the past challenges the other top-down narrative of the Enlightenment separation of humans and nature. Recognizing that Appalachian people interacted with their environment in different ways than outsiders or portrayed in travel literature challenges "the unrestrained exploitation of nature" that drives much of the modern world (Oliver-Smith 2010: 109). Exploring the nature/culture divide by re-examining how people interacted with their environment in the past challenges these dominant narratives of exploitation and development, forcing people to re-think notions of progress and modernity.

Re-thinking how the subaltern came to be the subaltern also challenges notions of racial and class divides. Structural inequalities highlighted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and Black Lives Matter protests point to the harm static, top-down narratives do to groups of people who have been historically silenced or

² While I am not saying that white mountaineers and their descendants are equivalent to indigenous peoples, the experiences of these two large categorizations of people – in terms of othering, connections to nature, displacement, and ongoing stereotyping – share several parallels, which I discuss below.

forgotten. Interrogating the sources of these top-down narratives and challenging them through archaeology can help to re-shape our understandings of our pasts and the pasts of others. While this study focuses primarily on breaking down Appalachian stereotypes as created by outsiders, taking this look at the same issue from multiple perspectives using multiple sources and materials can be expanded to archaeological and anthropological studies of other groups, especially when those groups are very aware of their own identities and the harm top-down narratives have caused them.

People from the counties surrounding the National Park are aware of their identities as locals, as people from Appalachia, and as Southerners and the reified cultural and societal ideas that accompany those identities. Since the Park opened, locals have acted as intermediaries between the tourists and the Park, where they “are not only at service to the tourist class but also . . . salient ideas of place” (Newman 2014: 364). Where people are seemingly absent from the Park, modern locals stand in for the lack of cultural interpretation. The result is simplified, but popular attractions such as Dolly Parton’s Stampede (formerly Dixie Stampede³) and the Hatfield and McCoy Dinner Show.⁴ I argue the lack of attention given to the Park’s human history beyond the 19th century is related to the continuation of these

³ Dixie Stampede and its relationship to the “lost cause” narrative surrounding the Civil War, the presentation of the region to tourists, and its continued implications for outside interpretations of Appalachia is its own box to unpack, and I will not be doing that here.

⁴ The other part of this idea is that locals are very much playing into outsider understandings of Appalachia because they know it will make them money, much in the same way the Cherokee in North Carolina display teepees and totem poles because they know the tourists will like them.

stereotypes of Appalachia and by not challenging Pigeon Forge’s sensationalized interpretation of the region⁵ is complicit in continuing to silence local voices, though NPS’s has started to shift on its position.

The Park in more recent years has started acknowledging other aspects of its human history, primarily through pamphlets and books available for purchase in either gift shops or at select trailheads. One booklet that can be purchased at the entrance to the Cades Cove Loop Road offers context up to the 1890s for the buildings and churches along the road. Acknowledging aspects of the region’s cultural history beyond the early 19th century (Table 1) as well as the anthropogenic impacts associated with the landscape’s cultural history is vital to understanding the Smoky Mountains in the past and present. One such part of the region’s history that is often intentionally forgotten is the early 20th-century timber industry which drastically altered the physical environment of the Smokies as well as the communities that lived in the mountains. I set out to try to see what, if anything, was left of these communities and the industry that so changed the landscape, based on stories from other hikers and blog posts about the “Ghost Town of Elkmont”⁶ and the memory of stumbling across the rusting chassis of an old car on a hike many years

⁵ Another important thing to note here is the shift from local-centric businesses and hotels in the region to attractions owned by large corporations. Jimmy Buffet’s Margaritaville and Ripley’s Believe It or Not! Have nothing to do with the region and point instead to inflated real estate prices and seeming declining tourist interest in the Park in favor of spending money on a large observation wheel or a pirate-themed dinner show.

⁶ The ghost town is not so much a ghost town – part of it is undergoing restoration – nor is it hidden, but it makes for an exciting headline.

[Elkmont TN Ghost Town's Sad History & Why You Need to Visit!](#)
[There's an abandoned resort ghost town in the Smokies -- Here's how to find it](#)
[Trip Advisor: Elkmont Ghost Town \(Great Smoky Mountains National Park\)](#)

ago. I wondered what impacts industrial logging had had on the environment of the Smokies before the National Park Service's intervention and how it had impacted local communities. And while many books have been written on the history of the GRSM (see Brown 2000, Camuto 2000, Frome 1966, Campbell 1960, etc.) as well as on industry in Appalachia (see Lewis 1998, Kirby 1987, Eller 1982, Lambert 1958, etc.), less work has been done on the archaeology of industry in the Smoky Mountains. So, I trained my eyes to the ground and started finding things that were not the beer cans and cigarette butts left by 21st-century tourists.

While the physical remains of 20th-century industrial logging are visible in areas of the Park (e.g.: where lumber camps once were), linkages between local memory, NPS documentation and interpretation, and the industry's material culture are scarce. In the past, NPS has conducted sporadic research on logging-related history. A historian from Clemson University, Robert Lambert, conducted a historical survey of the Park's logging history which was then relegated to the Park's archives. In 2009, Erik Kreusch, the park archaeologist at the time, recorded the remnants of two Little River Lumber Company cabins as part of a larger report on improving and maintaining two hiking trails. Additionally, the Great Smoky Mountains Association, "a nonprofit cooperating association" that is not a part of NPS (GSMA 2020), produced an undated auto tour of Tremont which mentions a few locations that would have been part of the logging railroad that went through Tremont, but this pamphlet was not available for sale in the Park, only outside of it. It seems that, while NPS has in the past commissioned historical or archaeological work on parts of the Park's history outside of the early 19th century, it has not done anything with

the information it has obtained. Instead, it seems as if the wilderness narrative is going to continue to be the interpretive focus in the GRSM. It has proven valuable in the past and matches up with broader NPS and conservation goals. However, interpretative focus on the wilderness minimizes the perception of the physical and social impacts of the 20th-century logging industry, allowing tourists to ignore the reality that the GRSM as it appears today is the product of human actions.

Eighteen lumber companies operated within the current bounds of the National Park at the beginning of the 20th century. This thesis focuses on the legacy of one. Little River Lumber Company (LRLC) was the largest lumber company in Tennessee and owned over 76,000 acres of land later incorporated into the National Park from Cades Cove in the northwest to the Sugarlands near the Gatlinburg entrance to the Park. Surface artifacts from industrial and household activities in different areas of the Park are vital to understanding the impact of Little River Lumber Company on the forest; the companies it competed with and absorbed, such as English Lumber Company; the people who worked for the company; and the construction of the Park today. The company's documents in the GRSM Archives as and oral histories from people whose families worked for the lumber company shed additional light on why and how artifacts came to be where they are and help present a more complete picture of the early 20th century in the Smoky Mountains and break down the romanticized monolith that is the 21st-century view on nature and the concept of the wilderness.

In 2019, in collaboration with and with the support of the GRSM Park Archaeologist, Allison Harvey, my hiking partners and I conducted a pedestrian

survey using a GPS unit to record artifacts and potential sites on what was once company land. We focused our attention on the logging towns of Elkmont and Tremont as well as the Little River Railroad spur lines radiating from each (Fig. 1). Because many modern-day hiking trails were old railroads, much of the survey was walking a trail itself and watching the ground. Trailside artifacts were tagged and photographed *in situ*. We watched for downhill slopes and flat places free of rocks and often with thick underbrush and small trees – indicators of an early succession forest, which is usually comprised of fast-growing pioneer plants that appear after a landscape has been cleared (McKinney, Schoch, and Yonavjak 2013: 380). We conducted grid surveys in these flat places where possible, though we were often bounded by terrain such as large rocks, steep drop-offs or rises, and bodies of water.

All forested areas had good vegetation cover – ranging from thick leaf litter to knee-high ferns – and, in some places, large amounts of modern litter. It is likely some surface artifacts were missed despite the best efforts. Most sites were visited twice, once in the summer and once in the winter due to the difference in vegetation cover. Locations with the largest concentrations of artifacts were revisited two or three times to maximize artifact recordings. Many artifacts can be hard to detect given their small size, their color (e.g.: rusted metal that blends in with the ground and underbrush), and their resemblance to modern litter, which means artifacts can and do move. They also resist context by virtue of being surface artifacts. They are difficult to date because many of the metal pieces were so rusted and corroded, they were difficult to identify in the first place while glass and ceramics were often

trampled into the ground. Additionally, while it is easy to associate a certain gauge of cable with Little River Lumber Company because no one else would be using this kind of cable in the park, it is much more difficult to separate what may be artifacts from the resort town of Elkmont from the artifacts of the logging town of Elkmont due to spatial and temporal overlap in the area. To try to protect the extant archaeological resources as much as possible, I keep artifact and site locations vague in this thesis. Great Smoky Mountains National Park a copy of all the GPS points collected over the course of fieldwork. I use Elkmont and Tremont as anchor points for my survey and offer the miles hiked to reach some locations but avoid the names of the trails or bodies of water.

All told, we recorded 127 surface artifacts and 15 potential sites for future investigation (Table 2) during our preliminary survey. In recording the physical remains of logging through survey and connecting them to local histories and archival documents, I draw attention to the actions and impacts of the timber industry and its connections to the National Park today. I attempt to better understand the connections between the archaeology on the ground and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park's presentation of itself as a wilderness by exploring the concept of wilderness itself and its relationship with the modern tourism industry.

| | |
|------------|---|
| 1761 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Henry Timberlake travels up Little Tennessee River |
| 1795 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blount County formed Sevier County Formed |
| 1796 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tennessee becomes a state |
| 1807-1819 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State surveys and grants land to settlers without granting deeds |
| 1819 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cherokee cede land to State of Tennessee Hiwassee District opens to settlers William Tipton granted land in Cades Cove from State of Tennessee John and Lucretia Oliver settle in Cades Cove |
| c. 1822 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absentee landowners start buying large land grants |
| 1838 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cherokee Removal |
| 1880s-1904 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selective logging by land agents, JL English and Company |
| 1901 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LRLC chartered |
| 1904-1907 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LRLC logs West Prong of the Little River |
| 1904 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horace Kephart moves to the Smokies |
| 1908-1925 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LRLC logs East Prong/Elkmont |
| 1910 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appalachian Club established |
| 1912 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wonderland Club established |
| 1913 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horace Kephart publishes <i>Our Southern Highlanders</i> |
| c. 1915 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LRLC starts building possessory cabins |
| 1925 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LRLC sells land to State of Tennessee for a national park, retains timber rights |
| 1926 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congress passes legislation for creation of a national park in the Smoky Mountains |
| 1926-1939 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LRLC logs Middle Prong/Tremont |
| 1934 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Smoky Mountains National Park Established |

Table 1. Timeline of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, centered on Little River Lumber Company

I then consider the relationship between the “Park as Wilderness” narrative and the reality of a landscape that is complex in ways that go beyond its biodiversity. The physical artifacts of the timber industry attest to a piece of history that has been

overlooked and emphasizes the heterogeneity of the Park as well as the relationship between local people and the landscape. Comparing and contrasting the archaeological data with written data is useful in this instance because different types of data say different things about this region during a specific period. As I will argue, a narrative that threads through the Smokies of the 20th century is one of environmental destruction, complicated ways of envisioning, shaping, and exchanging land, and expansion beyond the geographical borders of the Smoky Mountains. Different aspects of this narrative are materialized in the archaeological remains of Little River Lumber Company. In exploring these ideas through archaeology, I draw attention to a piece of history that has been intentionally forgotten by outsiders, lending credence to the need for further archaeological work in the GRSM to fully interpret its cultural past.

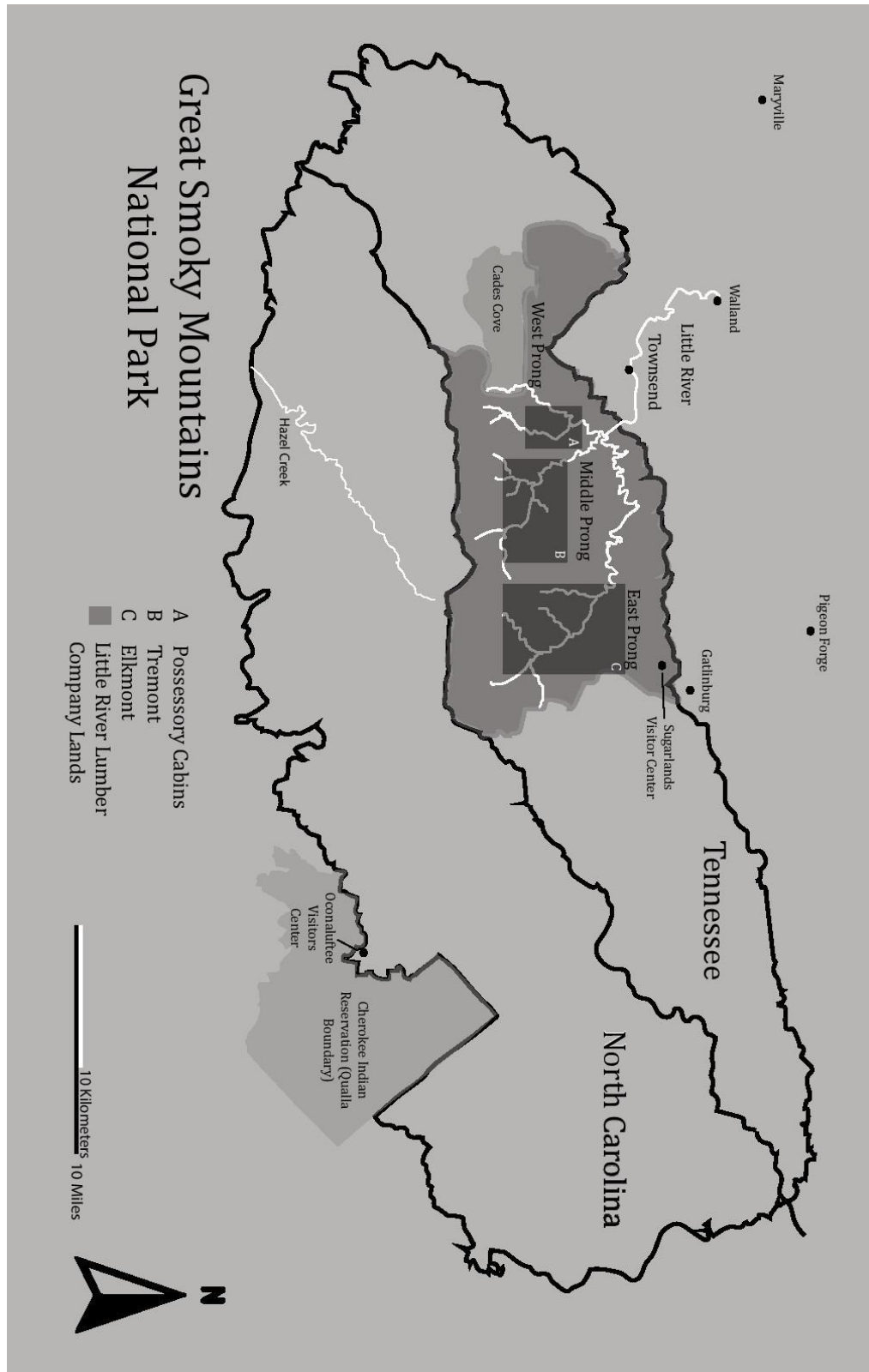


FIGURE 1. Map of study area within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

| | <i>Object</i> | <i>Count</i> | <i>Elkmont</i> | <i>Tremont</i> | <i>Elsewhere</i> |
|--|---------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Potential Sites</i> | Dam | 1 | | 1 | |
| | Possible House Site | 6 | 1 | | 5 |
| | Possessory Cabin | 2 | | | 2 |
| | Possible Camp | 2 | 2 | | |
| | Spring (water) | 1 | 1 | | |
| | Wall | 3 | 1 | | 2 |
| | Total | 15 | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| <i>Industrial Artifacts</i> | Axle | 1 | | 1 | |
| | Cable | 10 | | 9 | 1 |
| | Coal | 14 | 7 | 7 | |
| | Generator | 1 | | 1 | |
| | Foundation | | | | |
| | Rail | 2 | 1 | 1 | |
| | Stovepipe | 1 | 1 | | |
| | Wire | 4 | | 4 | |
| | Total | 33 | 9 | 23 | 1 |
| <i>Household Artifacts</i> | Belt Buckle | 1 | 1 | | |
| | Bottle Cap | 2 | 2 | | |
| | Ceramic | 33 | 18 | 5 | 10 |
| | Glass | 27 | 14 | 13 | |
| | Leather | 2 | 2 | | |
| | Shoe Parts | 4 | 4 | | |
| | Total | 69 | 41 | 18 | 10 |
| <i>Uncategorized Artifacts</i> | Baked Clay (Brick?) | 5 | 5 | | |
| | Bolt | 2 | 1 | 1 | |
| | Bucket | 1 | 1 | | |
| | Can | 1 | 1 | | |
| | Metal Bar | 5 | 2 | 3 | |
| | Metal Piece | 2 | | 2 | |
| | Metal Sheet | 6 | 2 | 4 | |
| | Nail | 3 | 3 | | |
| | Pipe | 6 | 1 | 4 | 1 (terra cotta) |
| | Total | 31 | 16 | 14 | 1 |
| Total Artifacts (not including sites) | | 133 | 66 | 55 | 12 |

TABLE 2. Recorded 20th-century artifacts from Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Chapter 2: Wilderness, Land Use, and the National Park

The cultural history of the park is linked to its natural history, which was shaped by the evolving definition of “wilderness” and its relationship to land use, aesthetics, and the National Park Service. The word “wilderness” conjures up a set of images, often related to a rugged version of nature that features steep cliffs, tall trees, rolling clouds, and vast open spaces. Wilderness in this vision is unpeopled space, devoid of the social rules that govern quotidian life and at the mercy of natural cycles. This separation of nature and culture in Enlightenment philosophy resulted in the creation of “wild” spaces that were separate from daily “human” spaces. In the 21st century, “there are [so] few areas of the world that have not been built upon, mapped, marked, or otherwise modified for human use” (Taçon 2010: 77) that the areas that seem untouched are perceived as special. Too much human influence on the area in question is perceived as harmful, so in public interpretations anthropogenic impacts are often minimized for the good of the wilderness space. However, this conceptualization of the environment is one related to that nature-culture divide and has been debated and debunked by scholars in a variety of fields for decades. While the nature-culture divide is, indeed, a cultural construction, its influence persists in common perceptions of land and landscapes.

Landscapes, even if perceived as untouched by human hands, are still human constructions, as “experience, history, value systems, relationships, circumstance, and individual choices all play a part in how landscapes are seen or described” (Taçon 2010: 77). But the Enlightenment separation of nature and culture created what is now a widespread “traditional [perspective] on human-environmental

interaction[s]” that “separate[s] and oppose[s] people and nature” (Erickson 2010: 106). In this perspective, “humans are said to either co-exist in harmony with nature or over-exploit and degrade” it (Erickson 2010: 106). In the United States, such a view of nature reflects a Western worldview wherein people should be separated from nature because of the intellectual capacity that separates man from beast and beast from plant. Separation from nature, then, is a choice wherein people attempt to gain control over the environment – something perceived as uncontrollable – and become less tied to natural cycles as a result. Success in this endeavor is therefore significant and requires constant maintenance to uphold. Such thinking is apparent in Euroamerican approaches to the North American “frontier”⁷ from initial settlement onward (see Cronon 1983, Turner 1893, Timberlake 1762), though such land was almost always inhabited and its seizure from indigenous peoples never peaceful. These histories have also been intentionally forgotten, often to minimize or excuse the inherent violence in colonialism and American expansion⁸. In terms of the natural environment, managing and taming the wilderness through forest clearance,

⁷ I use “frontier” in quotes here and a few other times throughout this thesis to emphasize its constructed-ness as a term as well as the massive weight it carries when considering Euroamerican and Native American relations, land seizures, etc. The concept of the frontier itself assumes an empty landscape, but more accurately represents existing racial and class divisions within a society and how those divisions relate to power dynamics and, in this context, American nationalism. At other times when “frontier” is not in quotes, I am referencing the specific, log-cabin-centric, Little-House-on-the-Prairie-esque visual aesthetic that is prevalent in the interpretation of cultural areas within the GRSM.

⁸ A nation-state does not have to pay reparations or acknowledge any wrongdoing towards a group of people if that history has been minimized or forgotten. Such reasoning is one of the reasons former colonial powers – the United States included – did not want to sign the United Nations *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*. Tribes potentially bringing charges of genocide could challenge the United States’ sovereignty as well as its seeming moral duty to interfere in the affairs of other countries. See WA Schabas (2000) “The Physical Element or *Actus Reus* of Genocide” for a more detailed discussion.

enclosures, and agriculture were vital to early Euroamerican settlers ideologically distancing themselves from Native Americans and bringing order to what they believed was a disorderly landscape.⁹ The Enlightened person has nature under control while the wilderness was demarcated as separate and unpeopled. The people who inhabited the wilderness were perceived as less civilized because they had been tainted by it.

Relationship to Land Use

The degree to which a place is classified as wilderness relates to its use, and, for much of American history, a useful and productive landscape was separate from what was perceived as barren wilderness. For early Euroamerican settlers like the Puritans, good land use tamed the wilderness and shaped it into something that reflected the Garden of Eden (Merchant 2007: 35). This transformation allowed people to exercise power over nature in various ways. The concept of individual tracts and barring others from private tracts allowed early settlers in New England to justify pushing Native Americans off their lands (Cronon 1983: 55). Clearing and dividing land into discrete tracts allowed landowners to exclude others from the landscape. Enclosure transformed the landscape by taking what was perceived as an inherently disorderly object and making it orderly through arbitrary boundaries. This abstracted the landscape itself, conforming it to human understandings of time

⁹ Though as many of the scholars I cite throughout this paper have argued, Native Americans had altered the landscape in ways Euroamericans did not distinguish or appreciate for various reasons, usually related to racism.

and space (Mrozowski 1999: 154). This abstract landscape was often rendered in two-dimensions which inscribed and divided regions that otherwise had no such boundaries.

Two-dimensional plans such as maps, Stephen Mrozowski argues, “allow builders and architects to conceptualize their aims ahead of time” outside natural cycles (1999: 154). The land, something that exists on a different time scale than humans, becomes fitted to human understandings of time and space. The abstraction of land transforms it from a network of interactions between species, biomes, physics, etc. to an object. Treating nature as an object further separates it from humanity, which “provides the moral justification for . . . domination, commodification, and exchange” of the land and other things that interact with it like livestock, water and access to it, and even other humans (Mrozowski 1999: 156). Maps exemplify the landscape’s transformation into “a commodity whose [economic] value [can] be determined and traded” (Mrozowski 1999: 154). In the Appalachians, land became a commodity through the active trading of land and the extraction of resources. Access to land was restricted and people were removed when their presence was not approved by those who have placed themselves in charge of the land.

Maps serve as tools to control the wilderness. For example, many Cherokee names are absent from current maps of the Smoky Mountains, preserved in a few places such as Tuckaleechee Cove, Oconaluftee, and Curry-He Mountain. The National Park Service has also left its mark on the landscape. Mounts Davis, Camerer, and Kephart, for example, are named for early Park boosters Willis P.

Davis, who was one of the first to campaign for a national park in the Smokies; Arno B. Camerer, Assistant Director of the National Park Service from 1919 to 1929; and Horace Kephart, who wrote *Our Southern Highlanders*, a text that shaped the public's perceptions of people who lived in the Appalachians in the early 20th century.

Maps can also create wilderness by omitting evidence of the people who lived in the Smokies. The Cherokee are the most obvious example of people having been omitted from the landscape, an omission from documentary records such as maps as well as their physical removal from the region. However, the omission of the Cherokee was a product of late post-Removal maps. Early maps such as the 1761 map of Lieutenant Henry Timberlake (Fig. 2), locate and name Cherokee towns in relation to mountains and bodies of water. While Timberlake's map was not created with commodification in mind, it was detailed for a reason. Timberlake was sent into Cherokee country by the British near the end of the Seven Years War. Timberlake wanted to better understand the lay of the land in the event the Cherokee ever decided to "give us the trouble of making another campaign against them" (Timberlake 1765: 8). Though Timberlake was sent to Cherokee country to assume "corporate responsibility" if the British broke their treaty (King 2007: xxv), he also used the opportunity to document a foreign land and the people who inhabited it and, along with the map, produced an "unparalleled eyewitness account of Cherokee life at the time" (King 2007: xiii). Accounts like Timberlake's served as valuable insights into Native American cultures and territories for the purposes of military conquest as well as attempts to "civilize" indigenous peoples by eliminating

tribal lands and leaving “individual Indian landholders scattered as farmer-citizens” (McLoughlin 1981: 4) so Europeans could get the land they wanted.

Timberlake’s map provided the British with a layout of Cherokee territory, and his memoirs were a valuable description of the people he encountered. Any criticisms of Cherokee culture centered around the tribe’s physical distance from British influence and the lack of exposure to Enlightenment ideas. Timberlake believed that if the Cherokee gathered into towns and had a more European-style legal system “they might become formidable” (Timberlake 1765: 38). Timberlake’s descriptions of the Cherokee are likely related to the British practice of ranking “human societies by their [perceived] cultural complexity” to determine how best to incorporate different tribes into the British Empire (Perdue and Green 2007: 12). He emphasized towns¹⁰ as a part of creating and perpetuating civilization – at least, the British conception of civilization – and described numerous Cherokee connections to European trade and culture. Timberlake noted “that the rivers were, for small craft, navigable” (Timberlake 1765: 8). He also noted a rigorous trade with allied Europeans that meant the Cherokee had access to European goods and clothes and were well-connected to other areas of the country. Despite these trade connections, Timberlake still conceived of Cherokee country as a kind of wilderness that, despite its character, held potential for Euroamerican use in the realm of

¹⁰ Though there is both documentary and archaeological evidence that the Cherokee and other Native American tribes had towns long before Europeans arrived. Timberlake himself visited several towns on the Little Tennessee River during his journey and described Chota as a “metropolis” on his map. One can also consider Mississippian cities like Cahokia and Poverty Point. See also Marcoux (2010) for a study on an 18th century Cherokee town in Tuckaleechee Cove, where Townsend, Tennessee, is today.

resource extraction. Timberlake noted “remarkably fertile” soils and a plethora of timber that could be used to great profit (Timberlake 1765: 8). The British military saw no beauty in the landscape, but they did see economic opportunities that alliance with the Cherokee could bring. They also noted a seeming lack of civility in the Cherokee in their perceived failure to make economic use of these natural resources. There is a question here of what constitutes good land use that is then echoed again and again throughout the years leading up to the present day. Timberlake’s visual depiction of the Smokies contrasts his written words in that the people he describes live full lives, though not up to the British standards of civilization, but the landscape outside the corridor along the Little Tennessee River is empty. It was barren and unknown but full of economic potential if those living in this wilderness could be brought to see its value.

When Euroamerican settlers started coming into the Smokies in the 19th century, they claimed the landscape from the Cherokee by re-naming its landmarks and places. Mountaineers connected family names to places, demarcating boundaries and ownership, and ultimately commodifying nature. But mountaineers also named other features of the landscape for their own mental maps. “Even the smallest topographical features, significant trees and insignificant springs, were named with equally careful attention” (Dunn 1988: 19). The naming of seemingly insignificant features of the landscape indicates that few, if any, of these features were actually insignificant. Existing surveyor and LRLC maps from the late 19th and early 20th centuries do not

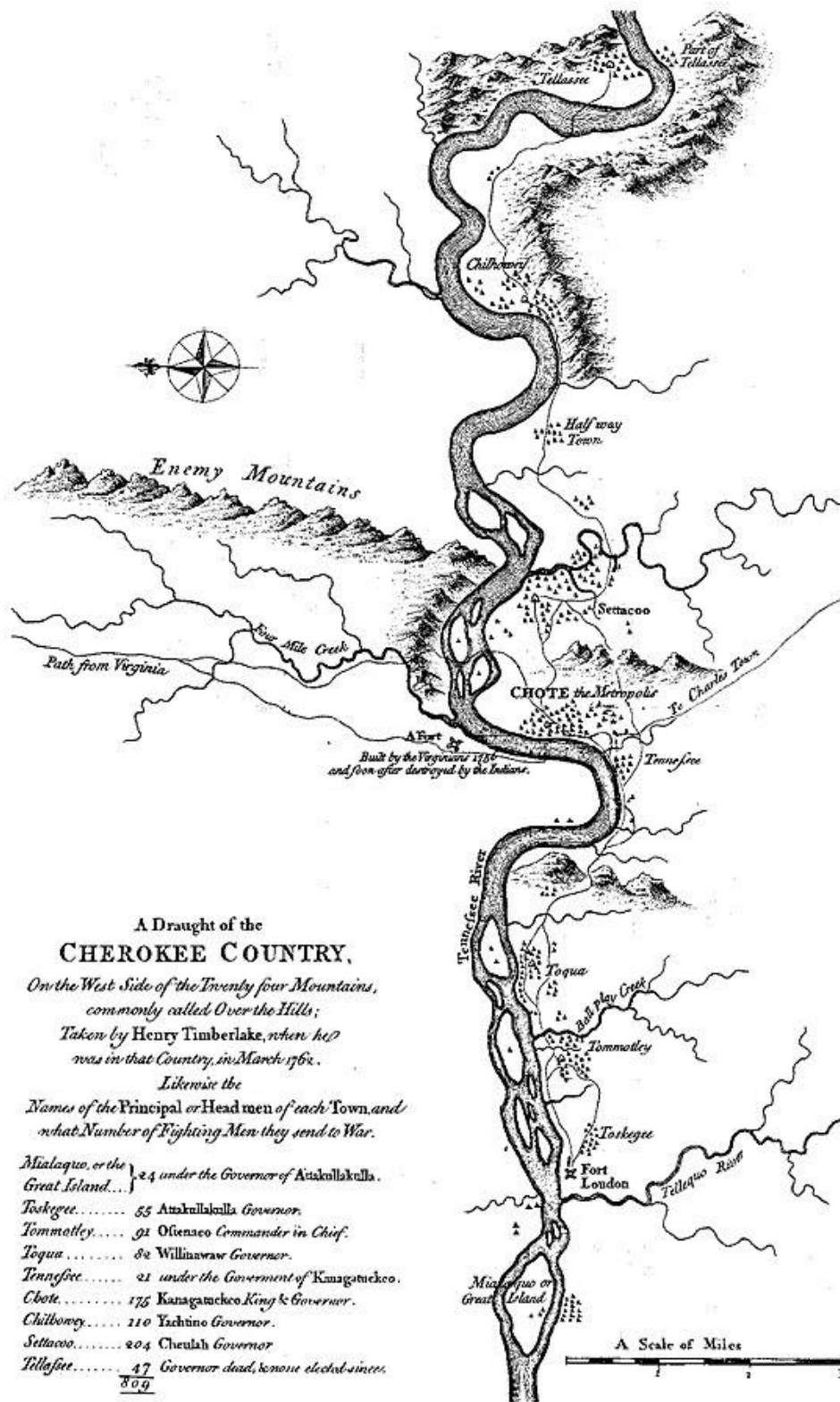


FIGURE 2. "Draught of the Cherokee Country" by Henry Timberlake, 1765.
 (Wikimedia Commons)

approach this level of detail. The deeds for the big land grants shown on maps like the 1892 survey map of the Smoky Mountains by James K Wilson – hereafter referred to as the Wilson Map – demarcate boundaries by noting that a post was placed at a specific tree next to a specific rock. However, the fact that these markers were often lost indicates a lack of familiarity with the landscape borne of treating it as a commodity rather than a place. In contrast, place names in Cades Cove, Dunn argues, “represented an invisible map, a vast detailed descriptive knowledge of Cades Cove with which all the inhabitants of the community were familiar, but which no outsider could begin to master” (Dunn 1988: 19). Early Blount County deeds still relied on someone knowing the bounds of, for example, William Tipton’s lot, but that knowledge revolved around a connection with the community to understand the abstracted landscape. Looking at the survey and lumber company maps that still exist, a lack of familiarity with the physical landscape is apparent while there is an intimate familiarity with the commercialized landscape. The Wilson Map lacks geographical features aside from the rivers while the LRLC Map (Fig. 3) is a bit more detailed. Some of the creeks have names attached to them. Mountain ridges are depicted, though they are not named. Perhaps this was because the mountains themselves were seen more as barriers than features of the landscape. Compare these to a modern map of the National Park, which is labeled to the point of clutter (Fig. 4), because understanding location is vital to navigation in this “wilderness” space. Though the Park has been marketed as a wilderness – with the word’s connotations of emptiness and being untouched by humans – the landscape retains these specific place names. These place names have stories behind them that are

known by locals as well as many NPS staff, demonstrating that the landscape is not a wilderness. Rather, the region's history has been fragmented and divided from the Park as presented to visitors to create a specific experience.

The commodification of nature, accomplished by transforming it into a discrete object, allows land to pass from common ownership to individual ownership. In the first instance, a community might determine how they will use available resources and modify the landscape whereas with individual ownership, an individual's desires may take priority over those of the rest of the community. The tragedy of the commons – a phenomenon wherein individuals share ecological responsibility of an area yet have no vested interest in protecting the land due to deferred responsibility (McKinney, Schoch, and Yonavjak 2013: 175) – is a real phenomenon. Individual ownership of bounded, discrete plots of land can lead to situations wherein the drive to extract as much as possible from a tract of land can have consequences that extend beyond the artificial borders of that tract, especially when capitalism is involved. The conceptualization of the Smoky Mountains as uninhabited wilderness in the 19th and 20th centuries further allowed for their commodification, as the land, full of farmers with no legal title to the land, could be interpreted by outsiders as “unimproved, wild land” filled with “uncultured, wild men and women” and therefore a “domain in need of cultivation” (Mrozowski 1999: 154).

The way the Smokies were commodified over centuries followed the evolution of good land use in the American imagination. In antebellum America, good land use constituted fencing in fields and making the land productive enough to feed a family and grow a farming community (see Cronon 1983). Developing the land into self-

sufficient farms with distinct boundaries visually and ideologically separated Euroamerican settlers from Native Americans. Mrozowski also noted an “anti-industrialist impulse in the United States” in the early 19th century that arose from suspicion of cities and a desire to avoid “all that was wrong with Europe” (Mrozowski 2006: 66) in terms of child labor, poor working conditions, and pollution. In terms of Indian policy, “The doctrine of private property [was] . . . an essential part of the American way” (Prucha 1986: 113), which was why the elimination of tribal lands and establishing individual Native Americans as farmer-citizens was such an important part of the Federal Government’s approach to dealing with Native Americans before the Civil War and why reservations were important in the latter half of the 19th century.

After the Civil War, good land use focused more on industrialization and urbanization. The collapse of an agrarian system dependent upon the labor of enslaved peoples meant that “industrialization would be equated with civilization” (Miner 1976: 4), and corporations in the United States gained dominance. Reconstruction meant an attempt to re-structure the South’s economy, but it resulted in continued dependence on African-American labor and cotton as a cash crop (Kirby 1982: 33) with exceptions in the form of textile mills and extractive industries like coal and timber.¹¹

¹¹ Jack Temple Kirby (1982) provides a much more thorough look at the South’s changing economy throughout the 19th and 20th centuries and accounts for the differences between the Plantation South versus the Appalachian South.

In Appalachia, the focus during and after Reconstruction was on connecting the people to metropolises and maximizing the utility of existing coal, mineral, and timber resources. There was also a movement by philanthropists from the northeast United States to elevate the “isolated” people of Appalachia out of the un-civilizing influence of the wilderness they inhabited and to involve them in the market economy. Scholars of Appalachian Studies like Henry Shapiro (1978), Alan Batteau (1990), David Whisnant (1983), and others have analyzed humanitarian and philanthropic projects in Appalachia and the movements’ relationships to the creation of an Appalachian Person: “good pure American stock” of “native-born, white, Anglo-Saxon, [and] Protestant” people (Shapiro 1978: 80, 85).

Appalachia represented a small-scale version of what happened in America over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries as settlers moved west. They seized lands from Native Americans and attempted to shape what Euroamericans construed as a wilderness into a pastoralist fantasy that also could turn a profit. American movement westward and increased industrialization in the United States in the 19th century “threatened the American environment more than any other development in modern history,” Carolyn Merchant argues, by opening natural resources “to unrestrained development in the pursuit of wealth and status. It made profit-and-loss the sole criterion for dealing with nature, conceived as inert matter” (2007: 71). This is evident in the timber industry which depleted vast expanses of forest in New England, the Midwest, and Pacific Northwest before it turned to the Appalachians in the early 20th century (Lewis 1998: 4-5). The commodification of nature is also evident in present-day Appalachia with the coal industry’s practice of

mountaintop removal, which often occurs at the expense of the health of those working in the industry (see Schiffman 2017 and Human Rights Watch 2018). It is connected to the fact that the products of pursuing profit via resource extraction and environmental exploitation are more valuable in purely economic terms than the land itself. It is an approach that relies on short-term thinking, and it persists in current conceptualizations of “wilderness” versus “everyday” land (see Swanson 2012).

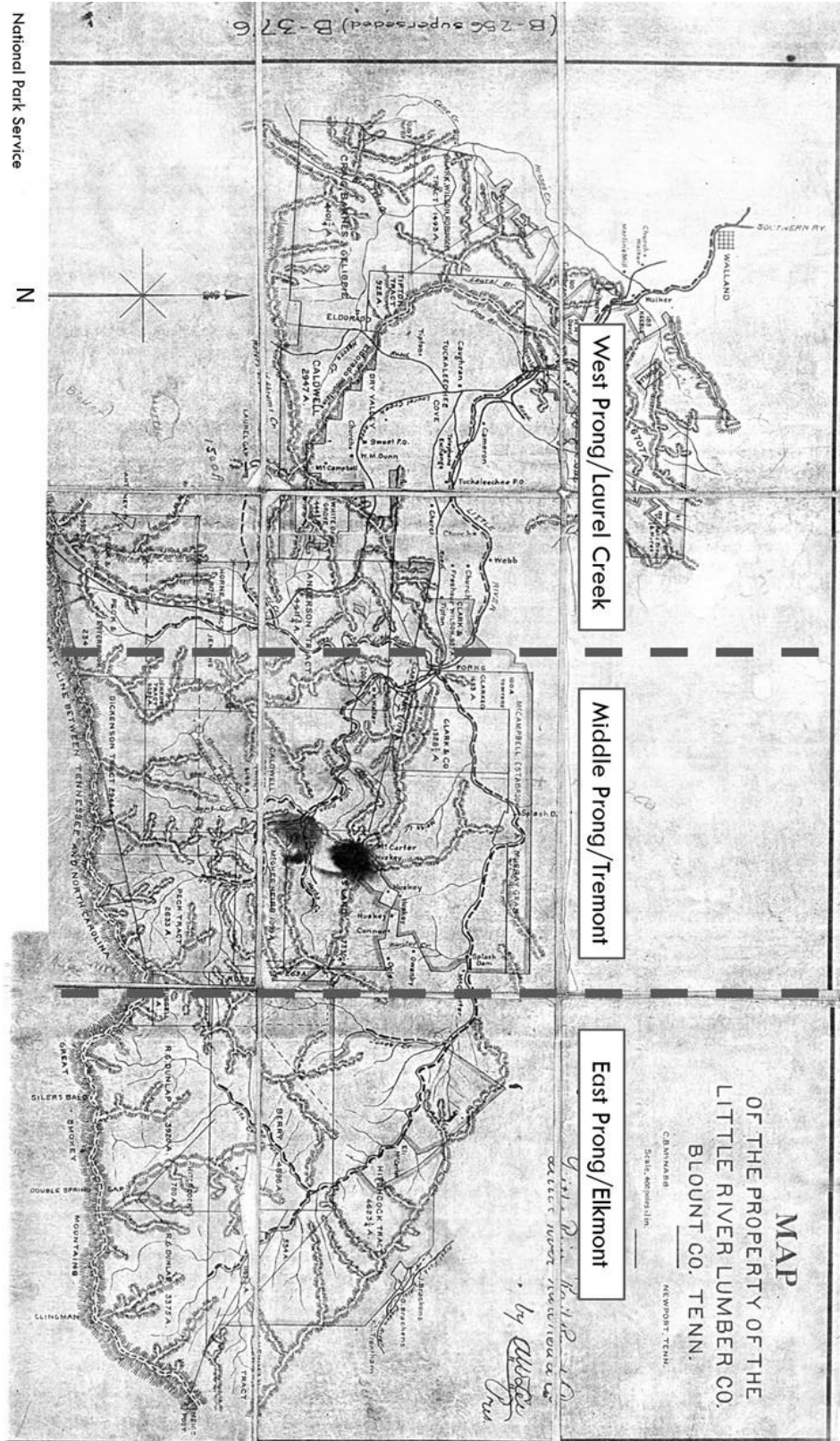
Over the course of the 19th century, resource extraction in the United States started to focus less on subsistence agriculture as more people moved into cities, industrialization increased, and “the environmental costs of commercial production” ramped up (Merchant 2007: 62). Given that Americans looked west for so long, the environmental costs of commercial production did not hit Appalachia as hard as the rest of the country until the 20th century. In the Southern Appalachians, which were populated by small subsistence farmers, “limited production supplied the rude comforts of subsistence, and transportation costs prohibited open-ended production for the market” (Merchant 2007: 62). Limited production meant that widespread environmental exploitation of the scale seen in the timber and coal industries in Appalachia in the 20th century and beyond were minimal compared with environmental exploitation in other regions like the Midwest and New England. But while most of the people of East Tennessee relied on subsistence agriculture as a before the turn of the 20th century, they were not alienated from the rest of the US economy. Rather, as Jack Temple Kirby demonstrates, Appalachian farmers produced commercial goods (1987: 102-103; see also Salstrom 1994: 7-8), keeping with trends outside the region. So, for some Americans, productive land use still

constituted good land use. What, then, does this mean for the continued existence of wilderness areas in the United States?

The Sublime

The continued existence of “wilderness” areas in the United States is less related to good land use as defined by industry and agriculture and more tied to artistic and social movements as filtered through Enlightenment philosophy. Aspects of the 19th-century Romantic movement clashed with the capitalist idea that unused land is useless land and elevated the ideological value of certain landscapes based on their aesthetic potential. Romanticism encompassed three different ways of viewing nature: the beautiful, the picturesque, and the sublime. There is a lot of overlap between these three subsets of Romanticism, but one of the most relevant tenets of Romanticism related to the Park is the Sublime.

The sublime is another aspect of Romanticism’s views of the landscape, differentiated from mere beauty and the picturesque (Hargrove 2008: 34-35). Sublimity evokes an element of heightened emotion and a lack of control. The concept originated in Romantic literature and emphasized attempts to put words to something that could not be described otherwise. For Romantic poets like John Keats and William Wordsworth, sublimity meant “crossings between the self and nature, with the boundlessness of the universe” (Academy of American Poets 2020). The connections between nature and the sublime are seen in poetry such as the works of Wordsworth with his contemplations of ruins – which could also invoke emotion – and natural features such as “Warm woods, and sunny hills, and fresh



National Park Service

FIGURE 3. LRLC Map. (Courtesy GRSM National Park Archives, Townsend, TN.)

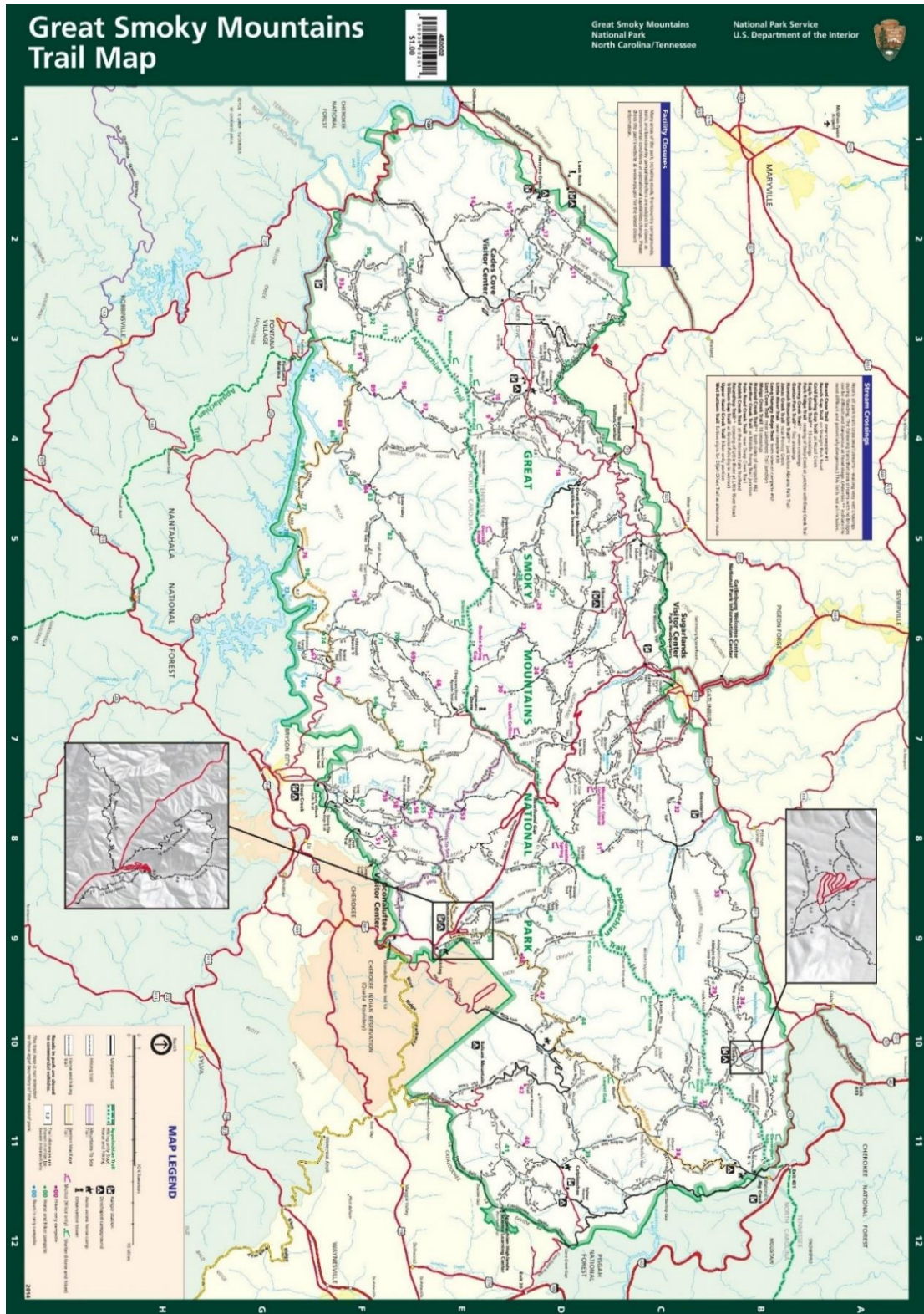


FIGURE 4. Trail Map of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. (Courtesy of National Park Service.)

green fields/ And mountains not less green, and flocks and herds” (1888: 9).

American poets like Henry Wadsworth Longfellow also evoked nostalgia and the wonder of nature in their works. *The Song of Hiawatha*, for example, addresses the reader as one “who love[s] the haunts of Nature, / Love the sunshine of the meadow, / Love the shadow of the forest, / . . . And the rushing of great rivers/ Through their palisades of pine-trees, / And the thunder in the mountains, / Whose innumerable echoes/ Flap like eagles” (Longfellow 1947: 151). Wordsworth’s vision of nature is gentler than Longfellow’s is in *Hiawatha*, but both poems are laden with imagery that evokes a sense of wonder at the world around the poet. Such imagery helped inform and shape other forms of Romantic art, notably the landscape paintings of the 19th century, wherein artists depicted things like mountains, forests, storms, and waterfalls to evoke feelings of reverence and awe as well as represent “a manifestation of God’s goodness” rather than God’s absence (Merchant 2007: 35).

Nature, in the works of painters like Caspar David Friedrich, JMW Turner, Albert Bierstadt, and the Hudson River School of painters “expressed the Romantic view of nature as a ‘being’ that included the totality of existence in organic unity and harmony” (Kleiner 2014: 658). For American landscape painters, the harmony of the landscape was important, but painters also “focused on identifying qualities that made America unique. . . . [such as] the moral question of America’s direction as a civilization” (Kleiner 2014: 661). These two issues in landscape painting resolved the divide between the picturesque and the sublime by combining them within the bounds of the painting. In some works, these efforts resulted in diptych-like compositions wherein a “dark stormy wilderness” was juxtaposed with a brighter and

“more developed civilization” in the same frame (Kleiner 2014: 661). Landscape paintings also maintained the nature/culture boundary by minimizing or excluding the human figure from the landscape. When humans were included, they were often Native Americans or hunters, blending in with the landscape by virtue of their Internal Wildness. Their presence on this otherwise undeveloped, sublime landscape connected them with the land and made them a feature, to the point where Native Americans were often included in paintings of the American West, for example, because painters and tourists believed “Indians somehow complemented or completed a wilderness scene” (Spence 1996: 35).

One of the most important qualities of Romantic landscape paintings is the sheer drama inherent in each piece. Turner’s works have lively brush strokes that lend energy to the paintings. Friedrich’s works contain a sense of loneliness and isolation conveyed through thick fogs and clouds and ruins. Albert Bierstadt, who completed many paintings of Yosemite and the Rocky Mountains for East Coast audiences (Monroe and Harris 2018), framed the west as a “land of promise and escape” (Monroe and Harris 2018). He did so by creating sweeping panoramas, wherein high mountains were emphasized by dramatic lighting. The scale of nature was designed to make the viewer feel small and in awe of its majesty.

The important thing to take away from sublimity and the Romantic movement are the connections between human emotions, nature, and nature’s importance to the human soul. A person is closer to God by being closer to nature, which means that it is important to experience nature in the purest, most unadulterated form possible. This creates complications for modern-day histories of Appalachian

landscapes. On the one hand, Romantic conceptions of the sublime offers reasons for the wilderness to exist. Emotional needs are important to fulfill, and preservation is an easy argument for a thing to which people have an emotional and spiritual attachment. However, while sublimity advocates re-entering wild spaces, it still maintains the nature/culture dichotomy. When one follows the Romantic doctrine of wandering, cloud-like, over vales and hills to contemplate the daffodils, one exists in the same space as nature, but there is no interaction with it. Nature has become art, an abstract beautiful thing to contemplate for some time and then move on.

As the 19th century continued, the American “frontier” shrank. Pieces of the untouched wilderness the Romantics had so valued, like large forests, started to vanish. “What remained of nature that had not been used for economic purposes or settled was eulogized as wilderness” (Merchant 2007: 36). Shrinking wilderness also demonstrated the destructive capabilities of humans (Merchant 2007: xx) and brought the concept of scarcity into play which increased the value of the wilderness. Scarcity, an economic concept, is related to the commodification of nature, as scarcity is directly connected to the availability of a commodity. Scarcity is then associated with higher prices and the desirability of the good in question (Lynn 1989: 258). Wilderness itself, then, was ideologically valuable because it was rare. When it was abundant, it was unwanted. The value of the wilderness was further embedded in its emptiness because it was beyond the affairs of humans, set apart in terms of distance and elevated by writers and artists.

The opposition between nature’s importance as an aesthetic experience and nature’s importance as a potential commodity is pervasive in Western culture. This

clash is important when considering 21st-century debates over land use between environmental groups and industries. For example, in February 2020, the Supreme Court of the United States was scheduled to hear a case involving Dominion Energy constructing a natural gas pipeline across the Appalachian Trail and the George Washington National Forest in Virginia. Here, the Romantic appreciation of nature and the country's need for energy were set against each other. The principle of scarcity was also apparent because "wilderness" in the US at this point is so valued for its rarity that the case was contested enough to be set before the Supreme Court. The Smoky Mountains in Tennessee and North Carolina saw the same level of debate, with an initial campaign to convert the Smokies into a national forest in the early 1900s (Catton 2008: 14) that shifted to concern over the vanishing forest and a push to preserve the picturesque landscape in the 1920s (Catton 2008: 21).

The Progressive Era

The Progressive Era (c. 1890-1920) marked another stage in the evolution of the American perception of wilderness. The valuation of the wilderness during the Progressive Era as a facet of good land use connects to the current gentrification of the wilderness and the wilderness experience. The Progressive Era took Romantic and pre-Romantic constructions of nature and the wilderness, incorporated increasing interaction with nature – usually in the form of outdoor sports – and marketed these activities to a growing white middle class. This attitude and related activities had a gentrified bent to them. Native Americans were perceived as savage for not living as white people and white Appalachian people were cast as backward

for not being involved in industry and needed to be removed for their own good (Horning 2019: 137, Gregg 2010: 49). Yet elite whites were viewed as entitled to use the wilderness.

Vacation resorts and outdoor-activity-based social clubs from the late 19th and early 20th centuries were populated by middle- and upper-class Americans (see Fanslow 2004 and Huhndorf 2001: 65-78). Rich capitalists like George Vanderbilt, Theodore Roosevelt, and others wanted places to pursue outdoorsy activities like hunting and fishing (Huhndorf 2001: 68). Such social clubs were tied to contemporary ideas of masculinity and aimed to “creat[e] a ‘cohesive, hard-working citizenry’” that knew how to be outdoorsy, militaristic, individualistic, and physically fit (Huhndorf 2001: 66). This, of course, involved spending time in the great outdoors. But since the great outdoors were disappearing under the pressures of agriculture and industry, club members “advocated for the protection of streams and wildlands, the curtailment of market hunting, and the use of fair methods of hunting that would allow the recovery of wildlife populations” (Merchant 2007: 142). While the wilderness was not valued as-is in the early 20th century, wealthy Americans seeking leisure pushed for conservation, even if recovery of natural areas was intended for future sporting. This movement in the early 20th century is where one starts to see vacation resorts focused on leisure and sport¹² rather than health crop up in places like the Smoky Mountains. They were designed as getaways for people

¹² Lots of resorts had been in the Smokies and Appalachians at large long before the Progressive Era. But they were focused around health. Hot Springs (aka Warm Springs), North Carolina, for example, was one early resort that touted the health benefits of sitting in warm water.

who could afford to take time to be in nature in the way sanctioned by Romanticism while promoting health and character benefits. Vacationers did not have to work the land, so they could focus on its beauty in an aesthetic sense.

In the context of the Smokies, vacation resorts created sharp divisions between locals and visitors which were immortalized in travel literature that addresses Appalachia, such as the works of Mary Noailles Murfree. Tourists' engagement with the landscape was primarily passive. In contrast, locals, like farmers from across the United States, engaged with the landscape daily. The landscape was not necessarily a place for leisure. It was familiar, managed, and important to the act of living. These two views of the same landscape permeated the communities in the Smokies in the twenty years preceding the park's establishment in 1934. Questions about good land use that had existed since Reconstruction became persistent when the resort town of Elkmont was established in 1910 and ultimately played a major role in the removal of locals from the landscape at the time of the Park's establishment.

The Wilderness and the National Park

In the 21st century, visitors to the Park, consciously or not, engage with this version of the GRSM that was influenced by Romanticism and Progressive-Era views on proper engagement with the wilderness and moving through the landscape. Data suggest the average visitor seeks out the picturesque and the sublime in the park. The heaviest park traffic during the tourist season is centered on

a handful of hiking trails. Of the most popular hiking trails,¹³ three feature waterfalls as endpoints (Rainbow Falls, Laurel Falls, Ramsey Cascades). The other two offer expansive views of the park from the top of the mountains (Chimney Tops, Clingman's Dome). The Park and the tourism industry stand to gain from offering a sublime experience to tourists. People want views, and people want to feel they are communing with nature, if only from the inside of their cars. The Park's natural features are the big draws, and in a world where nature is a commodity, lots of visitors mean the landscape is valuable because it exists, which allows it to keep existing.

But rather than close the gap between nature and culture, seeking the picturesque acts as a "distraction from the growing forces of alienation and anomie, and impersonalization of humans, relations with one another and with their physical environment" (Dawdy 2016: 6). The wilderness exists because it has been protected from the destructive activities of humans, but little thought is given to the idea that the "wilderness" might exist because of human activities. While a wilderness can represent an ideal world, the ideation of the pristine wilderness, arguably, "draws vital attention and efforts away from conservation in less pristine landscapes" (Swanson 2012: 37). The very existence of Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, which are less than a mile from the Park, attest to the bulk of environmental preservation and

¹³ Experientially, most popular trails are Laurel Falls, Ramsey Cascades, Alum Cave Bluffs, Chimney Tops, and Clingman's Dome. Chimney Tops is currently closed because of the 2016 fire. The NPS web page dedicated to hiking has Charlie's Bunion, Alum Cave Bluffs, Andrews Bald, Rainbow Falls, Chimney Tops listed as popular destination hikes. <https://www.nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/hiking.htm>

conservation efforts being directed at the GRSM while areas outside this arbitrary border are under constant development. The border between the two entities – nature and culture, if you will – is not a solid one. Most of the time, nature itself does not acknowledge there is a border. The frequency at which bears, elk, and other wild animals roam out of the woods indicates the wildlife do not care they left the National Park. Pollutants from nearby towns like car emissions, noise, and litter from the constant stream of visitors easily cross into the GRSM. Christopher Camuto argues that this island effect negatively impacted the reintroduction of the red wolf in the 1990s. The bounds of the National Park, which is about half as wide as it is long, was not big enough for a wide-roaming wolf, and at least one of the animals died after drinking leaked antifreeze from a car (Camuto 2000: 239). As such, treating the Park as a wilderness separate from all the human activity around it can be detrimental to conservation programs.

But an ecosystem “is more than the sum of its parts” (Swanson 2012: 39). Being more than the sum of those parts requires acknowledgement of the natural history and the cultural history of the Park and more than just certain, photograph-friendly aspects of that history. Thinning the mental divide between nature and culture through seeing and interpreting the archaeology of the park beyond Cades Cove and Daisy Town can aid in breaking down the sanctity of wilderness as a concept.

The direction of tourist interest in the context of the National Park points to larger problems with current American perceptions of wilderness. The Romantic conceptualization of wilderness, Cronon argues, “represents a flight from history”

which “offers us the illusion that we can escape the cares and troubles of the world in which our past has ensnared us” (1995: 16). An unpeopled wilderness is free of the trappings and rules of civilization and can represent an ideal world from which we have strayed. The escapist fantasy – which manifests in the attempts of Americans to seek “refuge from the ravages of modern life” through tourism (Gregg 2010: 71-72) – encouraged by wilderness can also be enforced by existing cultural interpretation. Cades Cove, for example, pushes back against the narrative of a pristine wilderness by harkening back to the log cabin era. The wilderness in the cove has been tamed, evidenced by rail fences and log cabins, but still threatens to encroach on this former community. The divide between nature and culture, arguably, is thin, but the divide between past and present is also prominent. In focusing primarily on the “frontier” history of the Smokies, one “valorize[s] the picturesque and preindustrial life” (Dawdy 2016: 51). This variety of antimodernism reflects popular perceptions of a Romantic wilderness, building on the sense of “reverence and awe” assigned to nature (Merchant 2007: 35).

Rather than closing the gap between people and nature brought about by the Enlightenment and industrial capitalism, seeking the picturesque acts as a “distraction from the growing forces of alienation and anomie, and impersonalization of humans, relations with one another and with their physical environment” (Dawdy 2016: 6). By simply existing in nature, rather than existing in concert with the physical world, alienation continues through unfamiliarity and relegating physical experiences to a distant past. Modern tourists play at being part of nature by taking photos of it, often framed through the window of a car.

Chapter 3: Heterotemporality and Patina

The perception of wilderness as an unpeopled, pristine version of nature is problematic because there is no such thing as an unmodified landscape. In the GRSM, such a presentation does not acknowledge the extensive human modification of the landscape and instead renders the landscape timeless by virtue of its being perceived as untouched. But focusing on the inherent heterogeneity and the entanglement of nature and culture by virtue of the region's history in the GRSM shows how the Park's visible cultural history has been collapsed into a single layer and veneered in the woods.

In her book, *Patina*, Shannon Dawdy argues that the erasure of cultural history – in the book's context, the erasure of ruins – “can be motivated by a desire to destroy [a] ruin's power to produce certain affects” (2016: 47). When NPS tried to eliminate the physical remains of the logging industry in the 1930s to promote the image of an untouched wilderness, the organization also promoted the intentional forgetting of much of the Park's Euroamerican human history. This intentional forgetting points to the entanglement of locals, the Smoky Mountains, and Progressive Era views of wilderness in the same space. Mountaineers served as the lynchpin for this intentional forgetting because the image of the hillbilly was bound up in outside interpretations of the Smokies. Aiding the hillbilly would save the wilderness. Audrey Horning, in her examination of the legacy of displacement of mountaineers from Shenandoah National Park, points to how mountaineers were framed as “the deserving poor, fitting subjects for upper-middle-class paternalistic ministrations” (2019: 136). Removal, one of the consequences of the GRSM's

existence, theoretically, would increase the standard of living for mountaineers by forcing them out of the mountain “wilderness.”

The combination of the Smoky Mountains – with its multiple, smaller ecosystems and ancient geology – with a long history of human habitation means that multiple stories and perspectives on the GRSM exist. The march of history is not straightforward. Rather, it collapses time in ways that challenge the notion of progress, which is especially valuable considering that some histories do not get told as much as others. A heterogeneous approach to the National Park’s history brings different aspects of that history to light and renders it a heterotemporal space wherein “different patterns of temporal relation and experience can coexist” (2016: 30). The physical world, the landscape we occupy and modify through daily activities “is a living, moving palimpsest, not with layers forever erased or covered over, but dense with potentials for echoes and continuities into the present” (Dawdy 2016: 30). A heterotemporal approach, when applied to landscape, allows the land to become, not a static, discrete object, but a canvas on which people move and interact with each other and with nature. The past is never truly distant in the consideration of heterogeneous time. Rather it informs and shapes current decisions and actions. Such thinking – outside the ordered logic of Enlightenment philosophy – can cause a rupture, wherein the “connection between past and present breaks down” and linearity collapses (Dawdy 2016: 31). In an archaeological sense, heterotemporality reflects the slow evolution of social relations and social stratigraphy which instead appear in “flashes and uneven tempos” (Dawdy 2016: 25) in the archaeological

record. In the GRSM, these flashes are manifest in the assemblages of patina-ed artifacts on the landscape.

To understand the Smoky Mountains as heterogeneous and heterotemporal, one must become familiar with the place beyond its wilderness veneer. While the history of the Smokies is not hidden, one must seek it. It cannot be discovered and understood through drive-by interpretation alone. The people who live near the Park now become more important, as does a willingness to move past preconceived notions about Appalachia as a region. Local understandings of the region play into heterogeneity and heterotemporality in that local people understand and feel the “tremendous amount of materiality, habitus, and social force” that accompany processes of heritage- and identity-making (Dawdy 2016: 28). The relationship between locals and the GRSM is complex because of the way memory can be embedded in objects and places as well as the potential for lingering resentment from the creation of the National Park. An Appalachian identity, like the concept of wilderness, comprises layers of local understandings of what it means to be from Appalachia as well as outsider ideas about the same. The modern relationship between locals and the landscape is apparent when exploring the Smokies with locals. Hiking becomes an act of remembrance and “an act of spatial transformation” (Bonilla 2011: 315) wherein locals reinterpret the past through means other than the accepted narratives about the Smokies. Visiting old cemeteries and caring for them helps reinforce connections to family and the landscape through active remembering and assert local-ness via movement through the landscape that does not involve sticking to the trail. Locals who wander off-trail also visit old sites unknown to the

modern visitor and, sometimes, to park administration. Incomplete interpretation of the early 20th century in the GRSM has led to a historical and cultural landscape dominated by fractured or “broken” memories (Bonilla 2011: 321). When local knowledge is sought and employed, a more complete picture of the park can emerge. For example, one of the sites I visited during fieldwork was only brought to NPS’s attention because a local hiker reached out to Allison Harvey. The fact that someone can point to an unusual rock formation and say “my grandmother used this to store dairy. There used to be a spring here” is exciting from an interpretation standpoint. Local knowledge produces a more complete picture of the Park, emphasizing how the cultural history of the Smoky Mountains helped create the modern landscape.

Local memory and experience of the landscape further acts to collapse time and adds to the importance of a heterogeneous and heterotemporal approach to the National Park. A heterotemporal understanding of the landscape of the GRSM and its associations with Appalachian identity and the environment challenge Romantic interpretations of the Park. It highlights existing layers of patina on physical objects related to the Park. Dawdy’s understanding of patina as a “superficial covering or exterior” is present in the Park metaphorically in that reconstructed forest covers over the cultural history (2016: 11). The cultural concept of the wilderness as applied to the Park acts as an additional patina. One does not expect to see walls and cables in an unpeopled landscape. The physical patinas associated with wear and age – here, dirt, rust, and moss – accrued by the artifacts of the timber industry are additional cover that disguise objects to look like part of the landscape. Foundation

stones resemble a pile of rocks. Braided cables mimic fallen vines. Ceramics look like quartzite until one gets close. In deflecting the gaze of a visitor from the object, patina both protects and hides the physical remains of the Smokies' history from those not searching for it. Patina here is two-fold; it is both the reconstructed forest as well as the rust and signs of age on abandoned objects.

To those seeking these objects that signify the region's history, patina acts as a reminder of the hasty abandonment of these objects and the removal of people from the landscape. The NPS and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) entered the area concurrently and immediately after the lumber companies left. In Tremont, the CCC literally "followed behind the last logging operations on Middle Prong and Tremont, conducting erosion control. 'As soon as the skidder is moved away from the site,' [J Ross] Eakin [the first GRSM superintendent] reported, 'the crews move in and do whatever work is possible'" (Brown 2000: 130). The hasty abandonment of logging operations and removal of local inhabitants meant objects were left behind in the new wilderness.

The region's history provides a context for artifacts in the woods, challenging the narrative that the woods are just the woods. Appalachia, untethered from its history, becomes both place and placeless, where "identities and cultures of the past link to, and are overlain upon, projections of the present" (Newman 2014: 360). The ability to look past the patina of a pristine wilderness is important to recognizing local versus tourist versions of Appalachia. The local continues to insert itself into a Romanticized landscape and counteract the idea that a "slow [zone and remnant] of a way of life . . . has been lost or is in danger of extinction" (Dawdy 2016: 4). The

people living in the shadow of the Smokies do not necessarily fit into the tidy narrative of the GRSM or the surrounding tourist industry, but they continue to assert their presence through remembrance of an uninterpreted history and interactions with the landscape that differ from outsider understandings of it, both in the past and in the present. The timber industry is one such area where the gap between local versus outsider understandings of the landscape is apparent.

Chapter 4: Humans in the Great Smoky Mountains

Humans have occupied the Southern Appalachians for millennia. Paleoindian sites (c. 21,700-11,500 BP) are present along the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers (Anderson and Sassaman 2012: 50). Archaeologists “have substantiated a Middle Woodland affiliation” for sites in the Appalachian Summit (Anderson and Sassaman 2012: 123), and other Woodland period sites have been discovered along river floodplains in the Smokies (NPS 2016: 4). Indigenous peoples domesticated plants and modified their environment from the start. Southeastern peoples domesticated weedy annuals like chenopodium, maygrass, sumpweed, and goosefoot on the floodplains of rivers, where Eastern Agricultural Complex plants thrived (Anderson and Sassaman 2012: 144). Such cultigens are part of the Eastern Agricultural Complex that dominated southeastern diets until the introduction of maize to the eastern United States between 500-300 BCE (Anderson and Sassaman 2012: 10).

For the Cherokee, agriculture was the “core of the internal Cherokee economy” (Hatley and Mitchell 1991: 37). Over centuries, Cherokee women created a system of intercropping that was easy to manage and minimized risk in agriculture (Perdue 1998: 19, VanDerwarker et al. 2013). Cherokee fields and towns required clearing areas of land and maintaining ties between towns and across the mountains through movement. Despite their words to the contrary, early European explorers, from de Soto to Timberlake, were not traversing an unmodified landscape. Rather, it was one that Native peoples had shaped to their needs, domesticating plants, removing trees, and clearing paths as needed.

The first white inhabitants of Cades Cove, John and Lucretia Oliver, stumbled into one of these altered landscapes in 1819. While there is not a lot of archaeological evidence that the Cherokee permanently occupied the cove (Marcoux 2010: 59), a major travel route ran through it (Dunn 1988: 7). Despite Cades Cove's origins as a through-route for the Cherokee, it did not remain unaltered for long. The settlers that followed the Olivers cleared large fields and drained the swamp at the lower end of the cove to bring Cades Cove to the state it still is in today – a broad, clear valley surrounded by forest and mountains, perfect for grazing and farming, and traversed by several roads to make navigation easier (Dunn 1988: 65). Other Euroamerican settlers were already establishing themselves in the area. Martha Ogle and her family first settled near Gatlinburg around 1806. William and Mary Ann Ogle Whaley and members of their extended family made their way into Greenbrier Cove between 1806 and 1809. Benjamin Chrisenberry “Chris” Parton, Dolly Parton's great-grandfather, arrived in Greenbrier shortly before the Civil War and established a Parton settlement along one of the many streams in the cove (Beard et al. 2016: 443). These early settlers and their descendants were not isolated farmers living out in the woods. Rather, they were communities with mills and churches and stores, like most other Euroamerican communities. While a few families lived independent of the larger cove-based communities like Will Walker – whom I discuss more below – they still maintained social relationships with those communities. The people of the Smokies were not the individualistic, rugged hillbilly farmers as so often portrayed in popular media.

Outside Views of Appalachia

The common conception of a naïve, dirty hillbilly emerged from postbellum travel literature that conceived of Appalachia as a region that was both progressive and backward. The region itself was othered after the Civil War due to political and cultural differences. “Facing the South, Appalachia supplied an indictment of the plantocracy and the decadent economy” of the South (Batteau 1990: 37). In the United States, “it set a critique of contemporary conditions in the context of some important national symbols” (Batteau 1990: 37) – namely the self-sufficient farmer. Appalachia was caught between an idealized past and a decadent present and distinct from a problematic South. The response to the region documented in literature emphasized that Appalachia must be distinguished from the rest of the South and salvaged.

The sappy, paternalistic literature of the 1870s and 1880s written by local color writers created and cemented the enduring image of an Appalachian Hillbilly. Fictional stories based in Appalachia, like those by Mary Noailles Murfree, were based on the author’s observations while vacationing on the Cumberland Plateau and in the Smoky Mountains. Murfree crafted melodramatic narratives centered around “romance and revenge” (Batteau 1990: 41) with characters that fit the plots. Murfree’s most famous work, *In the Tennessee Mountains*, depicts the people of Appalachia as un-lettered, poor, and existing outside of proper society. Those who leave the mountains become civilized, while those who stay are fixtures of the landscape. One female character is described as “hardly more human . . . than certain lissome little woodland flowers” (Murfree 1884: 131). Older women are

depicted as crones who have been worn down by years of hard work, often appearing much older than they are. The men of *In the Tennessee Mountains* are also affected by exposure to the mountains. The men who come from cities are powerless in a primitive setting but are always emotionally affected by it. Their foils are the male Mountaineers who tend towards violence. Patriarchs are always pulling guns and holding grudges and fighting over women. The young men are only saved from their savagery if they leave the mountains. Even then, it is the tempering effects of “a woman far superior to himself in education and social position” (Murphree 1884: 75) that can fashion the mountain man into a civilized one.

While Murfree’s works are largely unknown to a modern reader, her influence on later Appalachian literature is considerable. Notably, her writing influenced the way Horace Kephart described the people of the Smoky Mountains and their relationship to the landscape. Additionally, Kephart’s work is still widely published and sold in and around the National Park.

Our Southern Highlanders was published in 1913 and attempts to “soften our highlander’s portrait” (Kephart 1913: 11) from the Romantic image painted by color writers such as Murfree. Whether he does so is questionable, based on how often he references Murfree and focuses on sensationalized aspects of Appalachian life like moonshining, bear hunting, and nigh-unreadable descriptions and depictions of Appalachian dialect. Kephart wrote his book when he rented a cabin in the Smokies around Hazel Creek, North Carolina, after suffering a personal crisis. The premise behind *Our Southern Highlanders* is that Kephart has entered “a strange land and encountered a peculiar people” (see Harney 1873). The men and women that he

encounters are “deliberate and grave” and tend towards violence (1913: 213).

Women in Kephart’s narrative are subservient to men when they appear at all. Older women are “apt to have a worn and faded look” (Kephart 1913: 215) as a result of “hard toil in house and field . . . and ignorance or defiance of the plainest necessities of hygiene” (Kephart 1913: 214). The younger women are waifish and frightened of strangers.

Kephart also connects mountaineers to nature. Kephart’s highlanders are at home in the woods and rough and frightening because of poverty and “the law of the wilderness” (Kephart 1913: 6). Land-use and landscape are common themes in *Our Southern Highlanders*. The wilderness, for Kephart, was an escape from his life, and he presents the Smoky Mountains as such. His approach to the landscape of the Smokies vacillates between seeing nature as sublime and nature as ill-used. While he spends chapters talking about the rough, untouched beauty of the Smokies, Kephart’s work is interspersed with comments about how the Highlanders have made ill-use of the landscape. Similar rhetoric is seen in discussions of Native Americans, where Euroamerican settlers believed Native Americans were not making proper use of their land. Civilizing agendas could be justified because Euroamericans were helping improve the indigenous peoples while gaining access to and ownership of a great deal of land in the process (see Miner 1976, Cronon 1983, Perdue 1998). If the 19th-century version of American civilization would come to the mountains, great improvements could be wrought:

“I used to shut my eyes and imagine the transformation that would be wrought in these mountains by a colony of Swiss, who would turn the coves into gardens, the moderate slopes into orchards, the steeper ones into vineyards

by terracing. . . . But our native mountaineers . . . cannot be interested in anything” (Kephart 1913: 45).

While the mountains were sublime, the people, a fixture of the landscape, harmed it. This view is what influenced Kephart’s choice of topics, and it is this view of the people of Appalachia that has lasted to the present day. People of Appalachia were dirty, rough, and to be pitied because they inhabited a beautiful place and did not have the capacity to understand it.

The connections Kephart drew between people of the Appalachians and nature are connected to the creation of the American Myth. The framing of Appalachian People as a group and likening them – though not explicitly – to Native Americans via literature, art, and policy creates and reinforces a power dynamic between the people inhabiting a desirable landscape and those people – usually coming from outside the place – wanting to change the way it is used. Those from the outside use stereotypes to drown out local or indigenous voices in favor of a specific narrative. The Othering of Appalachia in the 19th and 20th centuries by expounding upon its lack of industrialization and supposed anti-modern qualities reinforced the superiority of American civilization outside of Appalachia (Dawdy 2010: 762). Conceiving of Appalachia as a wilderness region exoticizes both the geographical region and the people who live in it. Framing the region as backward due to isolation places it in the palm of the “dead hand of the past” (Slotkin 1973:3) and makes it repulsive to modernity. Appalachia, in remaining a sublime wilderness with backward people opposes the “utopian ideals of certain of the original colonists” (Slotkin 1973: 3) and against the ideals of industrial capitalism. The people of the

Smokies, having been subjected to the wilderness for so long, were no longer in control of the wilderness. They were of it.

While postbellum communities in the Smokies were insular, they were not as isolated or as behind-the-times as Kephart depicted them. People entered and left the region often. From the end of the Civil War, leaving was sometimes the best decision for a family. Emigrating to seek wage work was not uncommon, but it seems most emigrations were temporary. Eller, in his exploration of industry in Appalachia, notes that “hundreds of Blue Ridge families migrated to the eastern foothills to find work . . . while others moved to the industrial boom towns of East Tennessee (1982: 121). Dorie Woodruff Cope, for example, left the Smokies several times in her life. Her family lived on the North Carolina side of the mountains near the Cherokee reservation from 1898-1906. At one point, they sent her to live with grandparents in Waynesville, North Carolina, 30 miles away to attend school (Bush 1992: 20-22). The family left the mountains in 1906 to work at a cotton mill in Spartanburg, South Carolina “because Pa’s job had run out and they would have to move somewhere to find another one” (Bush 1992: 27). The family later returned to the Smokies and crossed the state line to live near Dorie Cope’s maternal family in Sevier County. They also moved back and forth between the Smokies and their Sevier County farm to participate in both the logging industry and subsistence farming for the rest of her life. Mobility, for the people of the Smokies, became a part of life, necessary for maintaining ties to the land.

Access to nearby markets was also important for mountain communities. Though most people were subsistence farmers, they also produced crops for

commercial markets. Livestock acted as the “first cash crop” for settlers in the 18th and early 19th centuries (Catton 2008: 8). Ginseng was another popular and profitable export (Catton 2008: 8) for many years. In the 1920s, 20% of Sevier County farmers grew barley to sell and other farmers “turned to tobacco in droves” (Kirby 1987: 103). Other ‘modern’ technology existed on mountain farms, too, when people could afford it. A trip up one trail in the GRSM brings a hiker to the remains of a traction engine that fell into the creek around 1920 (Beard et al. 2016: 250). Dunn asserts that “modernization was a complex process of accretion, often piecemeal” and that “limitations or backwardness in one realm did not necessarily limit [Cades Cove] residents in other areas” (1988: 225). The difficulty in accessing the Smokies is often cited as a reason the region was so underdeveloped, and while geographic conditions did restrict mobility into and out of the mountains, the region was still navigable. Roads existed. However, the ones that did exist were bad and depended on local businessmen to exist in the first place. For example, William Holland Thomas, a lawyer who played a pivotal role in re-establishing Cherokee landholdings post-Removal, and Daniel Foute, a businessman and resort owner from Cades Cove, both sponsored turnpike-building projects on their respective sides of the mountains in the 19th century. Holland’s turnpike connected Quallatown to other North Carolina communities, and Foute’s turnpike connected Cades Cove to other Tennessee communities (Pierce 2000: 18) as well as coastal and urban markets (Salstrom 1994: 8). Local people also wanted the roads. Citizens of Cades Cove “appealed to the county court for more workdays and an increased road tax” to improve their connections to the rest of Tennessee (Dunn 1988: 204). For

mountaineers, “better roads tied together a wide range of economic expectations of modern development within the community” (Dunn 1988: 225).

Lack of roads and dependence on farming did not preclude other technological adaptations. Dunn claims “a battery telephone system connected [Cades Cove] with the outside world as early as the 1890s” (Dunn 1988: 225). But it is difficult to judge the responses and extent of new technology coming in. Florence Cope Bush – Dorie Cope’s daughter – claimed industrialization was the turning point for mountaineers’ exposure to modernity. The lumber companies “opened the door to the outside world. We became aware of ‘things’ – things that money could buy, things that made life easier. . . . They had opened a door – a door we were forced to use as an exit from our ancestral homes” (quoted in Pierce 2000: 171) when the national park was established.

The uneven incorporation of technology into communities and uneven infrastructure development demonstrates how “modernization does not affect all areas of the periphery with equal intensity” (Eller 1982: xxv). The region’s geography made certain types of movement – such as the journey from Cades Cove into neighboring Tuckaleechee Cove and from there to Knoxville – easy. Farmers in Cades Cove could ship goods to Knoxville with relative ease. In contrast, other types of movement – such as crossing the Tennessee-North Carolina state line – were difficult, inhibiting movement of goods, ideas, and people across the state line. In this way, Western North Carolina was almost more isolated from East Tennessee than either area was from the North Carolina Piedmont or Tennessee Valley. The

physical geography of the Great Smoky Mountains had a hand in determining access to places, and that determined development.

Chapter 5: Timbering in the Smoky Mountains

From the beginning, the people of the Smoky Mountains cut timber to clear fields, build houses, and fuel fires. As part of participating in outside markets, mountaineers selectively cut trees to sell as timber (Lambert 1958: 9). Poplar, cherry, and ash were the most popular trees to sell. When cutting timber, locals would keep close to a water source to better transport the cut logs to market (Lambert 1958: 9). After “skidding the logs to the stream edge,” the logger chained the logs together in rafts and floated the timber downriver (Pierce 2017: 42). This was a popular method for small-time operations elsewhere (Cox 2010: 173). Such methods of cutting and transporting logs required little infrastructure, but as the timber industry grew and demand for wood increased, new technology and increased activity followed.

For smaller timber companies, the business involved a fair amount of financial risk and a lot of competition. Small companies appeared in records one year and were gone the next, bankrupt, abandoned, or absorbed by other companies. The Baxter Creek area in the northwest corner of the National Park, for example, was logged by six different companies in less than a century (Beard et al. 2016: 103). In Blount and Sevier Counties, the two lumber companies with the most influence in the 20th century were English Lumber Company and Little River Lumber Company.

English Lumber Company

Little River Lumber Company was chartered in 1901, but it was not the first lumber company on the Tennessee Side of the Smokies. It absorbed several smaller

companies, one of which was English Lumber Company, which was absorbed by LRLC in 1900. The company was owned by Knoxville-based businessmen John L English, JR McDowell, and Judge Hu L McClung. English was a lawyer who decided to branch into the timber industry. “Old city directories in the McClung Collection show English was a lawyer, land title abstracter, and notary public in 1893 and 1894” (Weals 1991: 7). These same documents also “list him as a lumberman for the first time in 1897” (Weals 1991: 7). The company, then, was comprised of East Tennessee businessmen, rather than the timber barons from out-of-state that later appeared in the Smokies.

English Lumber Company first appeared in deeds from the late 1890s (Abstract V 1912: 60), purchasing land from various small landowners. In the span of a few years, English Lumber Company amassed 25,000 acres of land in the Smokies, making them one of the largest lumber companies on the Tennessee side of the Smokies before Little River Lumber Company. While English Lumber Company’s impact on the social and cultural lives of the people of the Smokies was not as extensive as LRLC’s, its impact on the people and the environment were but a taste of what was to come in the 20th century.

English Lumber Company tracts were spread throughout the current bounds of the National Park. They held the almost 9,000 acres around Tremont, several thousand acres west of Tuckaleechee Cove and north of Cades Cove, and a tract along the East Prong of the Little River near Elkmont, possibly along Jakes Creek. It is likely the company held and logged land along Jakes Creek. One reproduction of an NPS map of Elkmont was annotated around 2009 by Herb Handy, a Knoxvillean

and previous owner of an Elkmont vacationer, marks the possible location of a “John English Logging Camp 1880-1890” west of Jakes Creek (Paulin 2015: 64). The location noted on the map lies within the bounds of what is now the Elkmont Historic District, south of the Society Hill section of the resort town of Elkmont. We searched the area noted on the map for any signs of a camp but did not note any visible surface artifacts or other signs of human activity. While the camp’s existence is in question – the note in the map reproduction is the only mention I uncovered of an English camp and indicates English Lumber Company was on Jakes Creek in the 1880s while Knoxville records show English identifying himself as a timberman in the 1890s – English Lumber Company probably had other camps. It may be prudent to return to the area for further survey as there are few documentary or archaeological evidences of English Lumber Company, and finding a camp would be an opportunity to learn about the company’s operations, their methods, and their employees.

While English Lumber Company’s camps proved difficult to locate and are not referenced in documentary sources, the company was physically present on the landscape in other ways. The company owned and operated at least one band mill in Rockford, Tennessee (Lambert 1958: 54), north of Maryville, and well outside the bounds of the National Park. English Lumber Company also used splash dams in their operations. The LRLC Map marks the location of several splash dams which may be English Lumber Company dams because they all lie on English Lumber Company tracts. These are likely the same dams as identified by Robert Lambert in his 1958 report to the National Park Service on logging in the Great Smoky Mountains (Lambert 1958: 54). Early in June 2019, Park archaeologist Allison

Harvey was contacted by a couple of hikers who wanted to show NPS a splash dam in the river near Tremont, and this is the dam I recorded. The dam was also noted in other park documents as being an English Lumber Company splash dam (Lambert 1958: 57). Lambert identified three additional English Lumber Company dams in his report which would have been part of a series of dams designed to help move cut timber to Rockford. However, a search of the Middle Prong of the Little River did not turn up any evidence of them. The dam I recorded may be the only surviving structure of its kind in Tremont, which makes sense because splash dams were not designed to be permanent.

Splash dams were not a new technology to the timber industry. Loggers in New York State had been using them as early as the 1830s in concert with sluiceways and existing lakes (Cox 2010: 97). In the winters, workers moved cut timber to the outlets of lakes to await the spring thaw when they opened the dam and flushed the logs out of the lake (Cox 2010: 97). In the late 19th century, splash dams were useful in forested areas with shallow rivers that made it difficult to float logs downstream unless one worked with the spring runoff or after a heavy rainstorm. They were ideal for logging in the Smokies because they eliminated the issues with too-shallow water or too many rocks in the riverbed, which prevented logs from reaching the deeper waters downstream. There are a couple of different types of splash dam. Eller described one model as a reusable earthen dam with “a large gate made of straight poles” set into the dam (1982: 90). When enough timber accumulated behind the dam, “the poles were pulled out, allowing the water to carry the logs out into the main waterway” and downstream (Eller 1982: 90).

The second type of splash dam commonly used was a timber frame filled with rocks. This splash dam did not have a gate set into it. Rather, when it was time to release the floodwaters, workers dynamited the dam. Based on a photograph from the Little River Railroad Museum in Townsend, the dam I recorded was the type that would have been dynamited. The splash dam we recorded, then, should not exist. And the way that it does exist blends in with the river around it. We could not see it until we were standing on top of it. The splash dam consists of six wooden beams, approximately two meters long each. Two beams have bolts embedded in the wood. All are partially submerged in the water and covered in moss, and the bolts are rusted. An additional beam running perpendicular to the six other beams has two large nails in it. From a distance, without seeing the nails, the beam looks like the log lying next to it. The whole structure looks like rocks and treefall, its physical patina hiding it from all except those who know it is already there (Figs. 5 and 6). Splash dams like this one associated with smaller operations like English Lumber Company marked the transition from selective cutting on private lands by individuals to the mechanized practices of companies like Little River Lumber Company. They therefore provide important material evidence of the region's industrial history.

While later logging operations in the Smokies tended to clear cut all useable timber, operations like English Lumber Company still followed a selective-cutting model due in part to technological limitations. Any logging had to be conducted near a stream bank, where logs could easily be skidded into the channel. Contemporary timber companies near Hazel Creek, North Carolina, that also used splash dams, focused on high-value timber such as poplar, ash, and cucumber. Poplar was the

most profitable wood to harvest (Lambert 1958: 14), and, along with woods like ash and cherry, was targeted first by selective operations. But even though English Lumber Company likely only selectively cut trees, they were still interested in making a profit fast. The speed at which the company acquired large amounts land indicates a drive to start work quickly, and the fact that they used the rock-filled dynamite dams indicates little interest in long-term investments.

The environmental impact of English Lumber Company's operations was significant because it represented a new level of destruction to the region. The opening or destruction of splash dams released "a torrent of water and logs downstream, gouging out stream banks and destroying aquatic life as they went" (Pierce 2000: 27). Accelerated erosion from streams and riverbanks already stripped of stabilizing root systems would have washed tons of soil and other debris into the river. Sensitive ecosystems were disrupted when organisms like fish and molluscs were removed and sediment was washed downstream. In the short term, sediment washes would have been beneficial for agricultural production in extant floodplains, but they would have harmed sensitive highland ecosystems as rich and valuable soil was stripped away. The movement of the timber itself also impacted the forest downstream. As the timber moved downriver on the flood released from the dam, the logs caught other young trees and plants, further disturbing the forest, and leaving a wake of destruction in the flood's path.

English Lumber Company's dams also represent an impact on the people living in the Smokies. Records on whom English employed, where, and for how long he employed them do not exist. Daniel Pierce (2017) noted that men who worked for

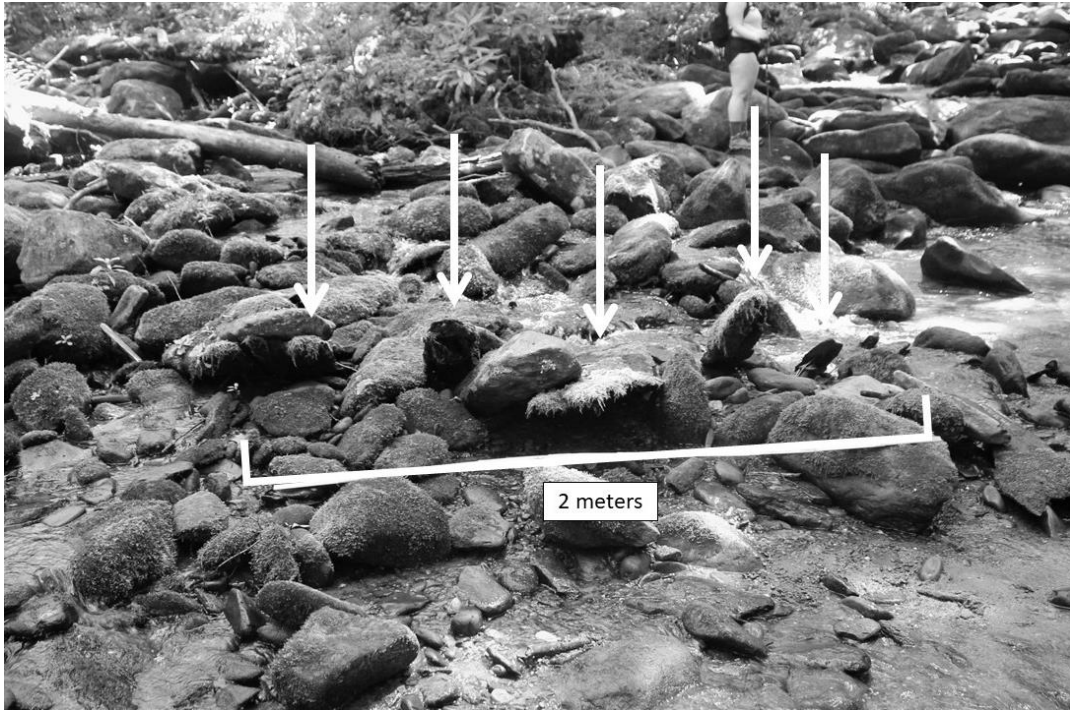


FIGURE 5. Splash dam remnants, arrows indicate wooden beams. (Photo by author, 2019.)

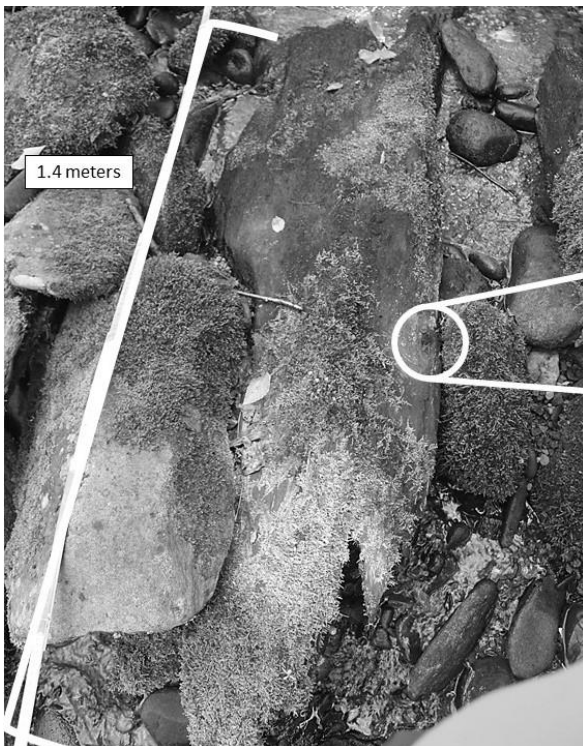


FIGURE 6. Close-up of wooden splash dam beam. Note metal bolt in white circle. (Photo by author, 2019.)

English Lumber Company would have been in significant physical danger when it came to the splash dams. Keeping the logs moving downstream after they were released put people at risk of drowning in the torrent of water or being crushed by the logs. In splash dam operations on Hazel Creek, three men died in six years while “countless unnamed others” were hurt (Pierce 2017: 43). Despite the danger, the work was significant for men in the East Tennessee Smokies as it was for the people of Hazel Creek. The first companies that used splash dams ushered in a “new era of cash wages” that acted as a “supplement to income from traditional agriculture” (Pierce 2017: 44). In Hazel Creek, the promise of cash wages resulted in a population increase from 27 families in 1900 to 42 families as counted by Horace Kephart in 1905 (Pierce 2017: 44). Because the English Lumber Company records are nonexistent, it is difficult to attribute any population growth in Blount and Sevier Counties to it. But it is not unlikely that men already living on or near land that English Lumber Company purchased in the 1890s worked for them.

Despite the company’s large land base and significant investment, English Lumber Company did not last long. By 1900 the company sold their land to other speculators who then sold their 25,000 acres of forest to Little River Lumber Company. After they sold their land, English Lumber Company disappeared almost entirely from the documentary record. Any mention of the company is limited to LRLC’s records, and English himself “disappear[ed] from Knoxville directories” after 1904 (Weals 1991: 7). A John Lucius English was buried in Knoxville in 1936. If it is the same English, he did not go far after his venture into the lumber industry. At least one of his other partners remained prominent in Knoxville. Hu McClung remained in

the area and kept his hands in various businesses. He is listed on the board of directors of Cripple Creek Mine on the Cumberland Plateau in 1904 (Shiflett 1905: 70) as well as on the Board of Trustees for the University of Tennessee in 1910 (University of Tennessee Record 1910: 6).

While one could argue that English Lumber Company was subsumed by LRLC in 1900 because they did not industrialize in the same way as LRLC could, English Lumber Company's failure was also related to environmental factors. A flood in 1899 "destroyed much of the infrastructure of English's operation" (Walker 2000: 261) and caused the company to lose a lot of the logs they had cut over the winter which were then probably stolen and sold by individuals downriver. Cut timber was easily and often taken by people who could sell it for full profit with less labor, and this is what likely happened to English Lumber Company. Businesses "seldom recovered more than a fraction of the runaways" (Weals 1991: 3) when logs were lost. The loss of upwards of a third of the year's timber spelled disaster for the company and "may have hastened the John L English Company's departure from Little River" (Weals 1991: 3) and drove the quick sale of all that land to Robert Sansom, Trustee, in 1900. By all accounts, English Lumber Company was out of the area and out of business by 1900. While they profited for a few years, the lack of industrialization – the absence of a railroad, only one band mill, and the lack of any real machinery beyond the splash dams – coupled with a natural disaster meant the company was short-lived and less competitive than the larger industrial operations that followed.

Little River Lumber Company

Colonel Wilson Bailey Townsend and his Little River Lumber Company filled the void left behind by English Lumber Company and other smaller logging operations. WB Townsend, for whom the town of Townsend is named, appeared in East Tennessee in 1901 and his company began operations that same year (Paulin 2015: 19). Little River Lumber Company was vertically integrated, which ensured total control over the timber produced from the initial harvest to the final boards. The company owned the Little River Railroad, which ran a standard-gauge line from Walland, Tennessee, into Townsend, where the company's sawmill and planing mill were located (Brown 2000: 54). From there, the railroad went into Little River Gorge and on to Elkmont and Tremont, company towns containing company stores and housing LRLC employees. From Elkmont and Tremont, narrow-gauge spur lines followed creeks and rivers up to the state line, providing loggers with access to as many trees as they could cut on the 76,000 acres Townsend amassed in the first decade of the 20th century.

Little River Lumber Company was one of many "corporate" logging companies in the Smokies that "forced out small operators" like English Lumber Company "through trusts and pricing advantages" (Brown 2000: 52). These corporations were not interested in selectively cutting the best examples of certain species of trees. They were more interested in taking everything they could get their hands on in what Eller described as "one of the most frenzied timber booms in American history" (Eller 1982: 87).

Though LRLC competed with lumber companies in the North Carolina Smokies and was the largest operation in the Tennessee Smokies, it was a smaller operation compared to corporations like Ritter Lumber Company and Champion Fiber Company. It produced as much timber in terms of board feet per day and had comparative acreage, but companies like Ritter and Champion had multiple operations throughout the United States. For example, William M Ritter, owner of Ritter Lumber Company which was “the largest lumber company in the US” at the time (Pierce 2017: 55), had operations in West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee, and at Hazel Creek in North Carolina (Eller 1982: 104). In contrast, LRLC was based in Tennessee and seems to have been WB Townsend’s main project, even though he controlled other “logging operations in Pennsylvania and coal, clay tile, and railroad holdings in eastern Kentucky” (Brown 2000: 54).

WB Townsend seems to have been involved in the day-to-day operations of LRLC in Tennessee. WB Townsend lived in Townsend from LRLC’s inception to his death in 1936. He and his third wife kept a vacation home at Elkmont, where she is buried. WB Townsend and his second wife are buried in Knoxville. The Townsends were members of local social clubs and friends with many of the elite of Knoxville (James 2010: 59). He was also involved with events in nearby Knoxville. In 1913, he was one of the directors of the National Conservation Exposition, which was designed to “promote in a big, unforgettable way . . . that natural resources were finite and had to be tended carefully” (Neely 2009). He presented himself to Knoxville society as a progressive businessman, and, in some ways, he was. By all

accounts, he was a shrewd businessman who knew how to keep his workers happy while still running a competitive business.

Based on his local residence, it also seems as if WB Townsend thought about his long-term investments in the Smokies. In 1908, Townsend commissioned one of his trains – the *Elkmont Special* – to bring tourists and day-trippers in from Knoxville. Mary Fanslow posits that Townsend did this to defray some of the costs of building the railroad up to Elkmont, and the service “proved so popular that the company increased its weekly run to daily service” (Fanslow 2003: 436). In 1910, possibly to capitalize further on his success with day-trippers WB Townsend re-sold a portion of the LRLC’s land to the Appalachian Club. In 1912, he sold another portion of cutover land to John P, Charles B, and AE Carter from Knoxville to build a hotel “to house timber buyers” (Fanslow 2003: 437) and additional vacation homes that the Carters sold as fast as possible (Fanslow 2003: 438). Wonderland was not as exclusive as the Appalachian Club (Fanslow 2003: 438), and the Carter’s initial push to sell the vacation lots points to their interest in the economic status of potential buyers over their social status (Fanslow 2003: 437). The vacation homes at Elkmont brought tourist traffic into the area from outside the Smokies. WB Townsend also “advertised his employee boarding house for traveling salesmen, teachers, and those interested in” fishing (Brown 2000: 84) but who could not afford a stay at the Appalachian Club or Wonderland Hotel. Townsend also donated land to a Girl Scout Camp called Camp Margaret Townsend – named after WB Townsend’s second wife – at Tremont that operated from 1923-1959 (Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont 2020),

placing Townsend's name in the Smoky Mountains in a context outside of the timber industry and potentially helping endear him to local people.

The Girl Scout Camp serves as one of many examples of WB Townsend's philanthropic efforts in East Tennessee. In the company's timber camps, Townsend enforced what Fanslow describes as a "paternalistic culture" (2003: 435). Camps contained amenities such as theaters, stores, and infirmaries, perhaps to "elevate" [the town and community] through such provisions as a church and community center" (Fanslow 2003: 435). The Ritter Lumber Company town of Proctor, North Carolina, had such amenities as well as running water and electric lights (Holland 2001: 94, 101). Townsend's camps likely had some of these amenities. At Tremont, we recorded the foundations of a power generator (Bush 1992: 172) in the river as well as a meter-long length of pipe that was possibly associated with the generator under the water, adjacent to the foundations. People who lived in Tremont, though, recalled that there was no running water (Teaster 2003: 8). Townsend also "promote[d] Methodism in the camp" (Bush 1992: 93) by building churches and making sure a circuit rider was there at least once a month. There was also at least one company-run school for employees' children (Maples and Price 2006: 22).

In addition to the paternalistic nature of LRLC camps, WB Townsend also engaged in direct philanthropic efforts towards locals and employees. At annual Christmas programs, the company gave everyone a gift (Maples and Price 2006: 22). In one letter to a Lillian Ogle, Townsend attached a check for \$50.00 "intended for [her] own personal use" and added that "he [would] be glad to send [her] say \$50.00 every two or three months" (Townsend 1924).

One could read his philanthropic actions as cultivating favor with locals to make them more receptive of the company and less interested in unionizing. Deplorable conditions in lumber camps elsewhere in the United States (Loomis 2016: 31) and coal camps in Appalachia led workers to start organizing into unions at the start of the 20th century. But unions in Appalachia and the rest of the South were not common. Timber workers in north Florida, for example, never organized, though they “did struggle to create a work environment that was in their own best interests. But for the majority, complaints and walkouts were unorganized, sporadic, local, and gave little indication of union organization and leadership (Drobney 1997: 125). The situation in the Smokies seems to have been more like the one in Florida. Unions were not mentioned in any of the documents I saw and do not appear to have had a major presence in the Smokies. The absence of unions, Margaret Brown argues, was attractive to lumber barons (2000: 56). The presence of W.B. Townsend in his lumber camps – he had a house in Townsend and a vacation home in Elkmont – may have helped him exercise more control over his workers and his business. Fanslow posits that W.B. Townsend “and his family’s extensive involvement in community affairs softened any sharp delineation . . . between their elite status and the laboring class,” (2003: 435), making the family more like members of the community.

It is possible WB Townsend’s social connections in Knoxville and to the National Conservation Exposition made him more amenable to the national park movement in the 1920s. Early park boosters such as Anne and Willis P Davis and David Chapman were entangled in both state and city governments as well as the

growing tourism industry (Catton 2008: 21, 24). Whatever Townsend's reasons for selling, Little River Lumber Company was one of the first timber operations to sell its land to the National Park Service. This made LRLC land some of the easiest acquisitions of the fledgling park movement. Other timber companies were more resistant to the park movement. Champion Fiber Company, for example, fought the government for years and only sold their land for a high price after several lawsuits, a literal fistfight, and a desire to avoid "negative public relations associated with killing the park" (Brown 2000: 96). WB Townsend was less combative and deeded the LRLC land to the State of Tennessee in 1925 for \$50 per acre in today's money (Campbell 1960: 48) with the stipulation the company could continue logging until 1939. He continued to profit while availing himself of land that would have been useless later.

Apart from the land base and tourism, WB Townsend's other major investment in the Smokies was in technology. Almost from its inception, Little River Lumber Company used the latest technology to harvest trees as quickly and efficiently as possible. Robert Lambert noted that LRLC was the first timber company "to make use of the new mechanical logging devices" starting in 1914 and often experimented with new machinery (1958: 55). The railroad itself represented a significant investment in terms of money and labor, but it could move much larger amounts of cut timber to nearby markets faster than floating logs in rivers or hauling them with teams. Large machines like "steam-powered skidders snaked logs from the mountainsides," (Great Smoky Mountains Association, n.d.). These machines increased the volume of logs that could be removed from the mountains over the

course of a day and sped up the production process considerably. Steam loaders “piled railroad cars high for the trip to the sawmill” (Great Smoky Mountains Association, n.d.), again speeding up production and taking some of the physical burden off log sawyers. The trains removed timber to nearby Townsend, where WB Townsend’s depot transported lumber out of the cove to sell in Knoxville on Townsend’s railroad. Band saws, like the one at the mill in Townsend, were an improvement over circular saws, as they “allowed cutting very thick logs” like the ones harvested in East Tennessee “with less waste” (Brown 2000: 54). They also changed working conditions, subjecting workers “to a more hectic pace, longer hours, and more danger” as they scrambled to fill daily quotas and keep up with the pace at which timber moved through the mill (Drobney 1997: 102).

Because the timber industry had to move so fast to meet demand, transporting cut timber to markets was paramount. Railroads also helped establish and legitimize companies’ claims to the land on which they purchased timber rights, acting as physical markers of ownership. The railroad was the lumber company’s backbone, and “transportation was the greatest physical obstacle and financial expense confronting timber companies” (Lewis 1998: 131). As mentioned above, significant investments were made in the Little River Railroad. Standard gauge engines ran from the terminus of the Little River Railroad at Walland, Tennessee – where passengers and cargo could switch to trains running on the Knoxville and Augusta Railroad – through Townsend and into the Smoky Mountains. At sidings at certain points on the standard gauge line, standard steam engines were switched out for gear-driven locomotives like Shay engines. Geared locomotives running on

narrow-gauge tracks could pull “heavy loads up steep hills and sharp curves” (Object Label 2012). Grades in the mountains were commonly around 10% but could sometimes climb to “as steep as 14%” (Holland 2001: 84). The extent of the Little River Railroad is visible on the LRLC Map as the dotted lines that follow so many of the rivers and streams up the mountains and to the state line. LRLC bridged streams, flattened hills, and in one feat of engineering, built a swinging inclined railroad bridge over the East Prong of the Little River (Holland 2001: 86) to access as much timber as possible.

The palimpsest of the standard gauge line is still traveled by park visitors today. Much of US Highway 321 and Little River Road, which connects Maryville with Townsend and Townsend with Gatlinburg follows the route of the old standard gauge line. Other remnants of the railroad exist in the Park as hiking trails. Former logging roads or railroad beds are easy to identify because they make for “suspiciously easy walking” (Camuto 2000: 224). They have easier grades compared to other trails, tend to be wide, and cut across the landscape rather than following it. Compare two trails near Tremont: Middle Prong Trail, an old logging grade, which is graveled and rises at a steady rate with few switchbacks and detours around the local geology, to Lumber Ridge Trail which has a steep grade, is narrow and strewn with boulders, and follows the natural contours of the ridge that it climbs. The physical remnants of Little River Railroad are also sometimes visible. Over the course of our survey, we located two two-meter pieces of steel rail from the old railroad, one at Elkmont, the other at Tremont. While hiking, we spotted and tagged two large bolts eroding out of the trail, as well. Infrastructure from the railroad also

survives. Four bridges on the hiking trails in the study area, for example, have been retrofitted to become footbridges (Fig. 7). These are identifiable because the footings for the bridges are much larger than the current bridge. One such bridge above Elkmont also had a large beam from the previous bridge on the creek bank beneath it (Fig. 8).

In addition to the rails and evidence of rails, we also found fourteen scatters of anthracite coal at the edges of these former rail lines. Anthracite coal burns cleanest and with the most energy of the four types of coal and is not a naturally occurring rock in the Smoky Mountains which are largely Precambrian sedimentary rock. Anthracite coal would have been useful in powering large, steam-driven machinery like overhead skidders or Shay engines. While it is possible local households used it, the coal we located during fieldwork was primarily trailside, adjacent to the railroad tracks, making the industrial connection a bit more tangible. We also found a 120-centimeter axle (Fig. 9) at Tremont Settlement, the LRLC camp, once was. The lack of a differential or hub knuckles on the axle means that it is “free-spin and one direction only,” (Lang 2020: Personal Communication) so the axle is from either a trailer or a train car. It falls within the size parameters for a narrow-gauge railroad (Zinoviev 2012), which is the type of railroad that ran through Tremont.

These artifacts expose the fact that the perception of the GRSM as an untouched wilderness is artificial. The presence of the artifacts also reinforces the idea that the concept of the wilderness is as a strong narrative because spotting even large objects like axles in the woods can be a genuine surprise, even when

one is looking for such objects. Things like bridges are easy to take at face value, and objects like the axle are difficult to spot even when one is looking for them. I tripped over the axle when I was trying to climb over a pile of fallen branches. These traces are, arguably, more disguised than other artifacts I recorded in the survey because of the way the CCC incorporated many of them into their re-creation of the forest. Coal is a natural object, even if it is not a rock that is from the Smokies. The Tremont rail indicates the CCC attempted to bury what pieces of the railroad the lumber company had not taken themselves, and the bridges demonstrate that existing infrastructure was likely used to ease some of the burden on the CCC.

While the railroad was probably the most important machinery in LRLC's operations, other technology was important to the company's daily operations. Steam skidders, for example, transported cut logs down the mountainside and to waiting flatcars. Skidders were a "system of cables run by a steam-powered vertical boiler" (Brown 2000: 60) that resemble modern loading machinery. The skidder sat on the railroad tracks, and cables "up to three-quarters of a mile in length" ran up and down the hillside, which increased the range loggers could work from a single stretch of railroad (Lewis 1998: 144.). Workers attached hooks or straps to cut timber, and the skidder "hailed in the cable" via a pulley (Lewis 1998: 144).

One model, the Clyde two-line ground skidder, could pull two logs at the same time (Drobney 1997: 74). These machines were destructive because the moving log flattened anything in its path, destroying young trees and turning up soil and undergrowth. Areas where they used ground skidders in northern Florida "remained barren of growth" years after logging operations had ceased (Drobney

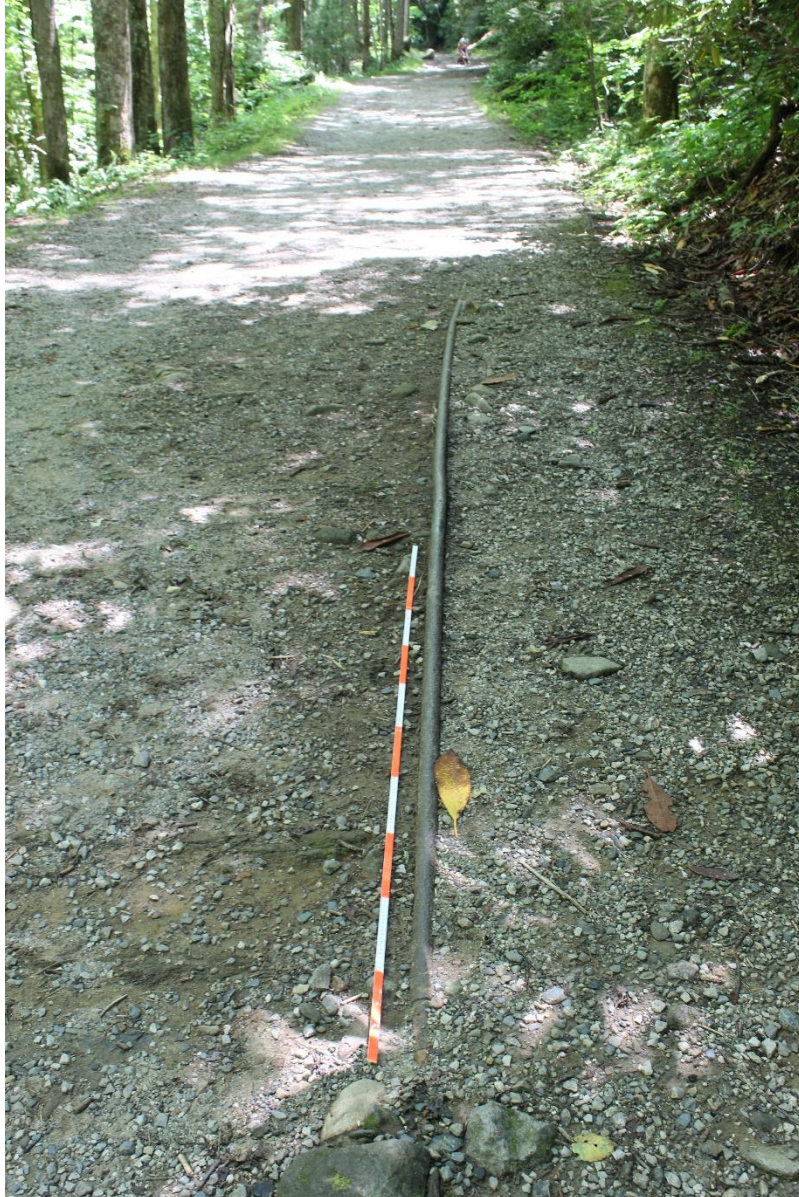


FIGURE 7: Rail at Tremont eroding out of trail with deep erosion channel on left of otherwise graded, crowned, and maintained trail. (Photo by author, 2019.)

1997: 75). The overhead skidders like the ones LRLC used were less rough on the soil itself because the machine hoisted the timber into the air. These were useful in



FIGURE 8. Beam beneath footbridge above Elkmont. Note large nail. (Photo by author, 2019.)



FIGURE 9. Retrofitted railroad bridge near Elkmont. (Photo by author, 2019.)

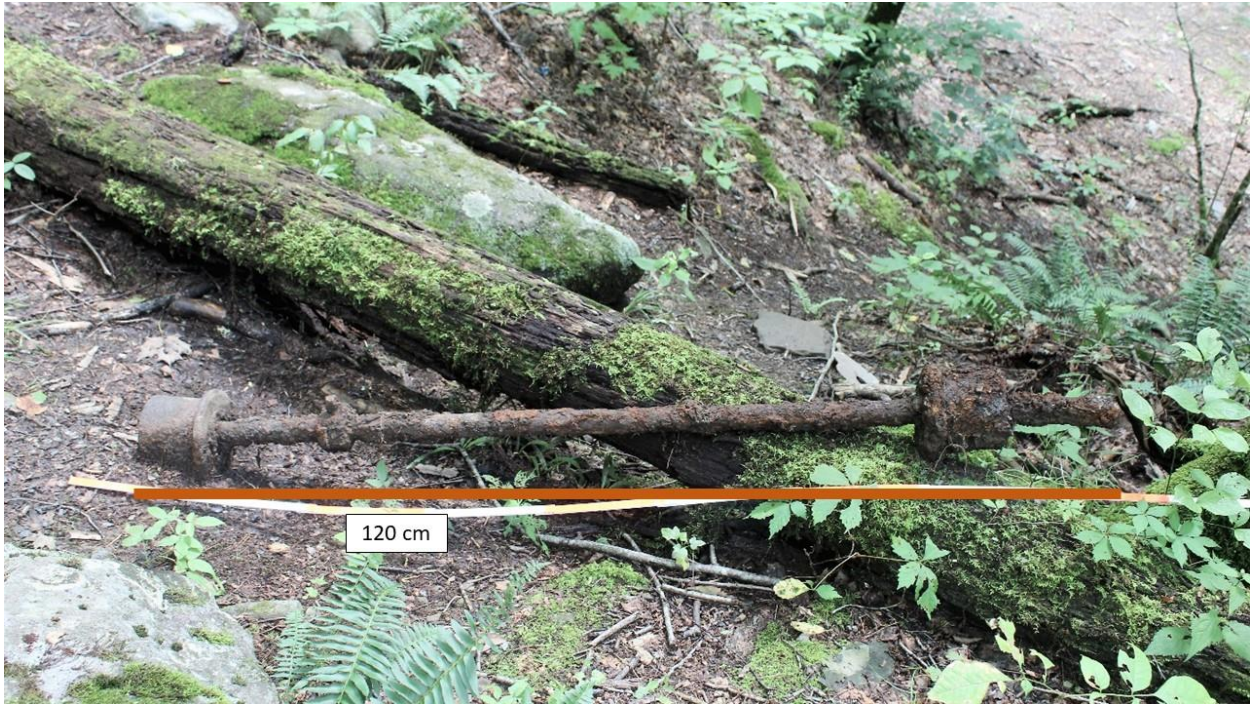


FIGURE 10. Possible train or trailer axle. (Photo by author, 2019.)

places where the grade was steep, as momentum could be controlled a bit better and nothing would get lodged against stumps. The ability to lift the log over obstructions doubled the output of ground-level machines (Drobney 1997: 75). But despite the seeming advantages of the overhead skidder over a ground skidder, it could not function as intended if the land still had trees on it. Logs would get caught on stumps or cables would get tangled in branches. Clearcutting the mountainside allowed for easier operation of the skidders, but the soil and everything sitting on top of it was let loose. Erosion “clogged streams with silt and slash, contributed to the massive flooding problems of this period, and destroyed countless numbers of fish and other aquatic life” (Pierce 2000: 24). Dried slash – the wood debris left behind

by timbering activities – was such a problem that one of the CCC’s early priorities was reducing fire hazards by cleaning up after the lumber companies as they moved out (Pierce 2000: 177).

Skidders and similar machinery were not only hazardous for the environment in the Smokies. Workers were at considerable risk during day-to-day operations. The speed at which skidders moved trees up- or downslope was dangerous for workers. Crews often could not keep up with the speed of the machine (Drobney 1997: 75). The machine itself was a maze of “unshielded gears, belts, shafts, and steel wheels” in which clothes and limbs could be easily trapped (Lewis 1998: 146).

The traces of this machinery can still be spotted in the woods. The artifacts, like those from the railroad, are often trailside, but they are not as varied. We recorded ten braided metal cables near Tremont which accounted for 30% of total industrial artifacts and 10% of all recorded artifacts from the survey. They ranged from one-meter lengths of cable to coils about two meters in diameter (Fig. 10). Like the coal, these cables were primarily found on the edges of hiking trails that had been rail lines near Tremont or in Tremont Settlement. One existing example of an overhead skidder at the Little River Railroad Museum in Townsend has similar cables attached to it, meaning the Tremont cables likely came from old machinery (Fig. 11).

We also tagged three pieces of heavy-gauge wire in the Tremont area. All three were near the old railroad, and one was over two meters above the ground because a tree had grown around it. The same hikers who showed me the splash dam pointed this out and posited that it was an old telegraph or telephone wire. They

may be from old logging machinery, but it is also possible they are associated with the CCC camp located three miles above Tremont Settlement (Beard et al. 2016: 404).

Technology like skidders and geared locomotives made LRLC's operations very efficient and very destructive. Fires frequently ignited in dry underbrush where trees had been stripped of limbs and other plants had been uprooted. Fall, the season in which rainfall is at its lowest for the year (NPS 2019: "Weather"), was especially prone to forest fires started by sparks coming off the steam engines or



FIGURE 11. Length of braided metal cable near Tremont Settlement. (Photo by author, 2019.)



FIGURE 12. Braided metal cables on Clyde Overhead Skidder, Little River Railroad Museum, Townsend, Tennessee. (Photo by author, 2019.)

skidders (Parton, Bradley, et al. 1958: 11). Several oral histories reference forest fires that impacted the people who lived in LRLC lumber towns. Grace Price Maples recalled one year in which her family stuffed what goods they could carry into pillowcases and followed the railroad tracks down the mountain to escape a fire. An early snow put the fire out and they returned home the next day (Maples and Price 2006: 24). Dorie Cope and her husband Fred were living above Elkmont at Higdon Camp in 1917 when a forest fire started.

“Trees lit up like Roman candles. Flames ate through the underbrush and swooshed up the trees, trapping the men higher on the mountain. They ran for any break they could find and out toward the camp. . . . Fred was trapped

behind a searing wall of fire. He had no place to run. The fire was already going up the mountain faster than he could run. . . . Winds were driving the flames along the treetops, gathering heat and speed as they went. Trees were exploding, sending fiery debris sailing through the air into the virgin timber” (Bush 1992: 132).

Cope started a bucket brigade to try to save her boarding house and belongings. One man got all his belongings “out of his house and put [them] on the rocks in the middle of the river” (Bush 1992: 133). Half the camp burned overnight, and thunderstorms put out the fire that had not already burned out. LRLC scrambled to try to find jobs for those that had lost their homes when the forest went up. Cope and her husband and the Woodruffs returned to Sevier County to try farming again.

While forests in the Smokies disappeared because of the activities of companies like LRLC, the companies made a lot of money in a short amount of time. “A three-man crew in 1913, was expected to cut about 10,000 board feet of timber a day” (Lambert 1958: 14). At its peak in 1910, “the millsite at Townsend was producing as much as 120,000 board feet [of cut timber] a day” with only a few hundred men on the payrolls, cutting the timber, operating machinery, and running the sawmill (Eller 1982: 107). For the people of East Tennessee, Little River Lumber Company pulled local communities into the industrial era at an almost unprecedented speed. Horace Kephart wrote:

“A new era dawns. Everywhere the highways of civilization are pushing into remote mountain fastnesses. Vast enterprises are being installed. The timber and the minerals are being garnered. . . . Along with this economic revolution will come, inevitably, good schools, newspapers, a finer and more liberal social life. The highlander, at last, is to be caught up in the current of human progress” (Kephart 1913: 376-377).

Kephart paints a picture of a bright future, but part of the issue with his set of assumptions of new things that would come to the Smokies was that the things that were supposed to come had, for the most part, already come. An 1882 description of Cades Cove noted “two school houses, two churches,” a mill, and “two stores, one of which does quite a large business and furnishes the people with necessities from abroad” (DA Clemens quoted in Cades Cove Preservation Association 2002: 8).

Young people attended Maryville College before the advent of the lumber companies, and reports of how students from Cades Cove were faring were published in both the *Maryville Times* and the *Maryville Record*, indicating newspapers from Maryville were circulating in the Smoky Mountains (Cades Cove Preservation Association 2002: 19). The “finer and more liberal social life” is a bit more difficult to unpack because, while society in communities was arguably dictated by the often-strict doctrines of the Baptist church, to say that people in the Smoky Mountains did not have vibrant social lives is also easy to question. Kephart himself describes a social activity in his chapter on the bear hunt, wherein several men get together for several days to hunt bears (Kephart 1913: 75-109). In later chapters, Kephart also mentions how “the mountaineers have a native fondness for music and dancing” (1913: 262) which again belies the existence of a social life he seems to want to avoid to drive his point home about the isolated highland farmer. Horace Kephart was a man who deliberately sought out an “abandoned cabin” (Kephart 1913: 30) at the edge of the community of Hazel Creek which was in an economic lull because one lumber company, Taylor and Crate, had just left the area and Ritter Lumber Company had yet to come in (Pierce 2017: 55).

While Kephart's assessment of the Smokies was incorrect at several points, he was right about one thing. The exploitation of mineral and timber resources in the Smokies signaled the dawn of a new economic era. Life changed drastically for the people of the Smokies as they became more dependent on wage labor, moved into company camps and towns, and lumber companies and land speculators bought more and more land, pushing farmers to the margins.

By the time the National Park Service set its sights on the region, the Smokies were a changed landscape (Fig. 12). There were few trees left (Fig. 13). The good soil was gone because there was nothing to hold it down. Fires ignited in dried underbrush. The growing tourism industry at Elkmont and the movement to establish a national park in the Eastern United States that fit the NPS's vision of "pure, primeval nature in the Eastern mountains" (Gregg 2010: 108) meant that the people who had shaped the landscape through agriculture and industry had to leave. While the absence of LRLC for Smoky Mountain communities would have been a blow, the National Park Service changed life dramatically for locals.

Removal from the Smokies in the 1930s was devastating for people who had grown up in the mountains. Sara Gregg (2010) and Audrey Horning (2019) both talk about the politics and realities of removal for the people who were displaced for Shenandoah National Park, and Durwood Dunn gives an account of removal in his book on Cades Cove (1988: 241-254). The government did not offer support for families who had to restart their lives during the Great Depression. Cades Cove farmers who sold their land rather than be removed were offered an average of \$20 per acre when they valued it at almost double due to improvements they had made

as well as the significance of their land to their identities, livelihoods, and the community at large. Those who could leaned on existing social and familial ties with people living outside the new borders of the National Park. But descendants were angry for years after the Park's foundation, a theme reflected in local writings. In Dunn's chapter on eminent domain, for example, the interviewees are bitter. One lifetime leaseholder, Kermit Caughron, "recalled . . . that the seizure of [residents'] land and homes 'sent a lot of people . . . to their graves'" (Dunn 1988: 252).

The push to create an unpeopled wilderness was important for the conservation of the remaining forest in the Smoky Mountains. The Smokies probably would not look like they do now without NPS intervention. But having the region's natural history as the primary *raison d'être* for the park meant that "the small farmers . . . who had used the mountains for centuries were . . . written out of the history of the park, even though their presence was indisputable" (Gregg 2010: 106). While LRLC and other lumber companies were responsible for most of the visible alterations to the GRSM's landscape, those physical impacts were quickly addressed and minimized in the latter half of the 20th century. However, it was those displaced from the Park who had to deal with the establishment of the National Park and everything that followed in terms of lifestyle changes, intentional forgetting, and the continued application of hillbilly stereotypes to displaced communities.

To add insult to injury, removal leading up to the establishment of the National Park was uneven. While locals who had been living and working in the Smokies for generations were forced out, one group could stay. These were the tourists who owned vacation cabins at Elkmont, elites from outside the region who could

negotiate lifetime leases, whose use of the land fit with the conservationists' visions for the park as a protected, recreational space. The result was a long-term, continuing dispute between the displaced locals and their descendants and outsider, elite communities.



FIGURE 13. Cutover land and logging railroad in Sevier County. (Courtesy National Park Service.)



FIGURE 14. Stump of a large Poplar tree cut by Little River Lumber Company on Lynn Camp Prong. (National Park Service, 1926.)

The Elkmont Controversy

In 1910, WB Townsend sold part of his cut-over land at Elkmont to the Appalachian Club, an organization of which he was a member. The organization built a clubhouse and a cluster of vacation homes called Daisy Town. WB Townsend used the existing LRLC railroad to shuttle people to Elkmont. By the 1940s, Elkmont had grown to include 80 vacation homes, the Appalachian Club clubhouse, and the Wonderland Hotel.

The Appalachian Club marked the introduction of tourism to Elkmont, though resorts in the Smokies were not unusual in the 19th and 20th centuries. The first hotel at Warm Springs (Later Hot Springs), North Carolina, was established in 1830

(Hot Springs Resort and Spa 2020). Daniel D Foute, the Cades Cove road builder, opened a resort at Montvale Springs in 1832 (Fanslow 2004: 129), and it was this resort where Mary Noailles Murfree spent summers gathering inspiration for her writing (Martin 2007: 48). While Elkmont was not based around a series of hot springs, the resort was very much in line with other contemporary resorts. At the beginning of the park movement, Elkmont was not included in the deal WB Townsend made with park boosters and had to be obtained by NPS much later. As was the case with obtaining land from Cades Cove and Greenbrier farmers, NPS had to deal directly with the people who owned the vacation homes.

Like the people of Cades Cove, Greenbrier, and other Smoky Mountain communities, those who owned vacation homes in Elkmont were reluctant to give them up. Unlike the people of other Smoky Mountain communities, the vacationers of Elkmont used their economic and political influence to keep their vacation homes beyond the park's establishment in 1934. Rather than having their vacation homes condemned, "most property owners in the two clubs chose an option offered in 1932 that permitted a partial payment for property in exchange for a lifetime lease. Between 1934 and 1942, the formal community of Elkmont was removed" though individuals continued to use the cabins (NPS 2009: v). While people in Cades Cove were removed outright, or those with lifetime leases like the Walker sisters were inundated with curious tourists (NPS 2015), life at Elkmont went on. In 1952, lifetime leaseholders surrendered their leases "for a fixed, 20-year lease in exchange for commercial power service" and water (NPS 2009: v). When those ran out in 1972,

they were extended and leaseholders “paid only a \$1/year lease fee or nothing” for their cabins. (NPS 2009: 5).

The descendants of the people who had been removed were not happy about this. An NPS survey from 1979 shows many locals were in favor of removing the Elkmont cabins while being in favor of the park as an institution (Marley 1979). Public opinion surrounding Elkmont grew stronger in 1982 when the park announced a new management plan for Elkmont. The plan proposed the removal of all cabins at Elkmont to allow for the restoration of a rare montane alluvial forest (NPS 1998: 3) when the extended leases expired in 1992. When 1992 came and NPS did not allow for a second extension of the leases, public opinion exploded.

Letters written by visitors to GRSM complained NPS was not respecting the cultural history of the region. Some claimed that the lessees’ attachments to the vacation homes were being disrespected and that the park had adopted a stance of “if everyone cannot rent a cabin in Elkmont, no one can rent a cabin in Elkmont.” The opinion of visitors and lessees contrasted public opinion from local descendant communities. In the eyes of the locals, the cabins only existed because the lessees had money and political influence, something those displaced in 1935 did not have. Several editorials and letters also cite that the lessees only paid \$1 per year and subsidized their leases, allowing them to keep the cabins at a cost far below what locals felt they should have paid (“Editorial” 1991).

NPS, meanwhile, fielded letters from angry locals and angry visitors with the attitude of trying to soothe everybody enough so they could implement a management plan close to the original. The 1982 management plan called for the

elimination of the physical reminders of humans from the landscape and the restoration of the wilderness. The plan had ecological and ideological dimensions but overall reinforced the pristine wilderness narrative the Park had been working hard to realize. The modified plan currently in place involves the restoration of some of the cabins and the destruction of others. While the attempt at balancing natural history and cultural history is apparent here, it should still be interrogated.

Preservation and Metanarrative

The Elkmont Controversy brings up many questions related to historical interpretation in the GRSM as well as the relationship the park has to the wilderness. The first question to ask is about whose history is being preserved. While Cades Cove was held up from the 1950s to the 1990s as an example of how NPS was maintaining the region's cultural history, it was only the afterimage of the early 19th century that was preserved. Empty cabins hint at working farms and communities in the cove, but they do not represent Cades Cove as it was when a community actually lived there, especially considering the work that went into reverting the cove to something akin to its antebellum appearance. Elkmont, now, represents the cultural history of the upper classes of the early-to-mid 20th century while the farms and houses of others who lived in Elkmont were destroyed. The local farmers who were displaced from the park are still not represented. Their history, not one of taming the wilderness or enjoying nature by being in proximity to it, is still absent from the broader narrative surrounding the park. Even though local families had longer histories of habitation on this landscape than the vacationers and are as

equal stakeholders in Elkmont as the vacationers or NPS, they were not treated as such. Giving more credence to the complaints of Elkmont vacationers in considerations of how to manage Daisy Town minimized the voices of the descendant community, who felt that the cabins represented NPS's continued disinterest in local voices in favor of placating a few wealthy people (see also "Editorial" 1991, Skelton 1992).¹⁴ Local newspaper reporters and letter-writers in the 1990s noticed that efforts to preserve Daisy Town even while demolishing Society Hill and Millionaires' Row "sent the message that the Elkmont colony was more important than other communities in the park" (Thomas 1999).

The Elkmont Controversy also recalls questions about what constitutes good land use. Cades Cove represents the good land use of the individualistic farmer gaining a living through hard work. Elkmont represents the good land use of being in nature for leisure. The land use that implies environmental destruction and severe anthropogenic impacts on the forest is still absent because, for this area, it is no longer good land use. As such, the nature-culture divide pervades Elkmont's legacy. The preservation of the vacation houses maintains the idea of good land use in the Smoky Mountains is one of "look but do not touch." This stems from the idea that nature, by itself, is separate and unaffected by humans on a quotidian level. It

¹⁴ It is also interesting to see the number of letters in the GRSM Archives from visitors regarding the Elkmont Controversy. Many people wrote then-superintendent Karen P Wade, accusing NPS of disrespecting the region's history by tearing down these vacation cabins. Such commentary is also present in the comments section of a 2017 documentary produced by local news station WBIR called ["Elkmont Will Shine"](#). Many of the letters from the 1990s as well as the comments on WBIR's video suggest the extant cabins could have been used as lodging for current visitors in the Park (despite Elkmont's adjacency to a large campground), which, given the area's history, rings of irony.

ignores the fact that humans had a hand in creating this landscape beyond the construction of some vacation houses, both before and after 1910.

It also perpetuates common myths about Appalachia. The absence of locals from the landscape after the Civil War implies that they either vanished entirely, or they did not progress beyond the structures visible at Cades Cove. Viewing the narrative of the vanished and restored wilderness through local response to managing Elkmont demonstrates continuing local presence in the region. It also raises the question of why locals are absent from interpretations of this landscape though they express continuing attachment to it through strong opinions about the management of existing cultural history.

However, while Elkmont perpetuates the nature/culture divide, it also breaks it down by emphasizing the fact that the park is a zone where the present and past collapse together. The ruins of vacation houses attest to the fragility of the human hold on the landscape as well as how involved NPS is in managing the park. The ruins of destroyed vacation homes at Elkmont were only created in 2017, yet they appear much older. They contrast with the Daisy Town buildings being preserved just down the hill and with the carefully maintained cabins at Cades Cove. The ruins, reminders of human occupation, “sustain a rupture of space-time in the present until they can be folded into the landscape as something old, comfortable, and homey – once they have acquired patina” (Dawdy 2016: 47). Through their patina, the Elkmont ruins as well as the physical remains of the logging industry demonstrate that they are older than the surrounding forest, which would appear older than the evidence of cultural history elsewhere in the park.

Ruins, Displacement, and a Sense of Place

The favor granted to Elkmont vacationers demonstrates the strength of outside public opinion on the specter of an Appalachian Person. The Elkmont controversy also demonstrates how the timber industry with its visible destruction of the landscape fell out of favor with conservationists and how stopping industrial activity became necessary to fix the region. Kephart espoused this view that industry would bring great change to the mountains, thus elevating our southern highlanders to the standards of living of other Americans. The problem was that while mountaineer society did change, people did not subsequently decide to abandon their homes. For LRLC workers, despite having stepped up in terms of wage work, their efforts were still not enough in the eyes of outsiders. This is likely because locals were not interested in conforming to outsiders' views of how they should be. While Elkmont vacationers could keep their cabins because they were using the land "correctly," removal of mountaineers was framed by park boosters and state and federal governments as a final push to save mountaineers from themselves and the wilderness.

Removal from one's home is a traumatic experience. Horning (2019) has pointed out the impacts of seeing the ruins of one's former home on a recently displaced person. For mountaineers, place was an important aspect of community and individual identity. Losing the land might have felt like losing part of community or individual identities. However, the inhabitants of the Smoky Mountains did not go far after they were removed from the park. Many of their descendants still live in

Blount, Knox, Sevier, and other mountain counties in Tennessee. Though they lost their homes, “the pain . . . may have been somewhat ameliorated by an ability to maintain community” (Horning 2019: 151). Still, as was the case for the residents of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia, “watching hard-won fields slowly taken over by vegetation, and perhaps also reliving memories of seeing their ancestral homes dismantled, rendered the loss ever present” (Horning 2019: 151).

Chapter 6: Landownership in the Smokies

Mountaineer claims to the lands they inhabited were hard-won. Reiterating local rights to inhabit the Smokies became a legal issue, mainly in the latter half of the 19th century. I mentioned above how Elkmont vacationers had the legal clout to keep their cabins, and locals did not always have access to legal teams like lumber companies or the wealthy did. They were already a marginalized community. As discussed above, this situation was historically based, as fights over who owned what land had, in the 1930s, been going on for nearly a century.

The archaeology of Little River Lumber Company in the present as well as the company's impacts on the landscape in the past is influenced by property law, which influenced how people moved through the landscape in the course of their daily lives. In documentary records, evidence of the influence of property law is readily available in court injunctions, depositions, and titles. Archaeologically, property ownership appears in the form of fence posts, walls, and, in the context of LRLC, railroads and structures called possessory cabins. The purpose of a possessory cabin is in the name. One built a cabin on a plot of land and improved the land, usually by clearing and cultivating it. Mere habitation and possession of the land in question acted as proof of ownership. This was a handy system in a setting where deeds were hard to file and surveyors' lines were ever-changing. While possessory cabins themselves explicitly appear only a couple of times in the documentary records, their presence and the principle behind them is apparent in East Tennessee.

It is difficult to pin down exactly when the first permanent white settlers came to the Smokies. The arrival dates for a few early families are well-documented, but the Ogles and Olivers and Huskeys were only a few families. White explorers had been moving in and out of the Southern Appalachians since de Soto's campaign in 1539 (Anderson and Sassaman 2012: 178). Henry Timberlake voyaged down the Holston and Tennessee Rivers and followed the Little Tennessee upstream to Overhill Cherokee towns in 1761. William Bartram, a naturalist, also passed through the mountains and spent time with the Cherokee in the 1770s (Bartram 1791). The British maintained a few forts in East Tennessee before the Revolutionary War, and Cherokee women married traders, often to increase her status (Perdue 1998: 81). White people were not strangers to the Smoky Mountains by the start of the 19th century, but they were usually transients who traded with the Cherokee in nearby towns.

At the end of the Revolutionary War, the United States Federal Government stripped the Cherokee of their lands, following a civilizing agenda proposed by Henry Knox, the first Secretary of War. Knox's doctrine sought "the total integration of the Indians east of the Mississippi" not by religious means but by "extinguish[ing] all tribal titles to land" and leaving "individual Indian landholders scattered as farmer-citizens" (McLoughlin 1981: 4). While Knox's experiment failed by 1819 because "the Cherokee Council voted . . . to deny citizenship in their nation to any" who took part (McLoughlin 1981: 5), the initial evasion and resistance to the Federal Government's civilizing agenda ultimately did not last. Removal in 1838 forced the Cherokee out of their communal lands on the mountains, and those who remained were pushed into

southwestern North Carolina which, at the time “represented one of the least desirable areas” to live “due to its rugged terrain and inaccessibility” (French 1998: 64).

White settlers flooded into the region following the Treaty of Holston in 1791 and Tennessee statehood in 1796. Across the Tennessee Valley and the Shenandoah Valley, the settler population grew by nearly 60% in the 1790s and then by about 20% in the 1800s and again in the 1810s (Salstrom 1994: xvi). The influx of white settlers into what had been considered a “frontier” zone – insofar as there were few permanent Euroamerican settlements – meant the new state government had to figure out a system for dividing and granting land. This was not a new idea, as the State of North Carolina had issued grants in the State of Franklin before it became Tennessee (Alley and Sowell 2016: 3). However, the bounds of these grants could be difficult to define because the mountains were difficult to cross, and the Cherokee were resisting white encroachment on their land. Michael Frome notes that “the 1790s opened the way to settlement, land grabbing, and speculation” in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina,” (1966: 68).

The land in East Tennessee was divided into distinct districts. The land encompassing the Smoky Mountains in the southern portion of Blount County was known as the Hiwassee District. It was created in 1819 when the 1817 and 1819 treaties between the US Government and the Cherokee officially – i.e. on paper – removed the Cherokee who refused US citizenship to west of the Mississippi River (Alley and Sowell 2016: 9). Before 1819, no land grants had been issued in this district because it was Cherokee land. Starting in 1819, the Hiwassee District was

public land open to white settlement, with no prior grants issued on that land (Alley and Sowell 2016: 9). The State of Tennessee asserted that the Hiwassee District “was surveyed BEFORE the land was sold” [emphasis original] (Alley and Sowell 2016: 9).

The Hiwassee District was bordered on the North by the District South of the French Broad and Holston which encompassed the rest of Blount County and Sevier County. The boundary between the two districts was known as the Indian Boundary Line. This line became the county line between Blount and Sevier Counties and ran roughly west to east with its eastern terminus at a point known as Meigs Post, an important survey marker on the North Carolina-Tennessee border. The process of granting land in the District South of the French Broad and Holston was like that of the Hiwassee District. However, this district was open to settlement before the Hiwassee District, being owned by the State of Tennessee by at least 1805 (Haywood and Cobbs 1831: 124). Starting that year, settlers could claim titles “for such quantities as they may respectively claim, including their improvements, not exceeding six hundred and forty acres each” (Haywood and Cobbs 1831: 125), the same as in the Hiwassee District. The 1806 statutes also state that those occupying the land have rights to the land, so long as ten percent of the purchase price is paid to the state by 1808 (Haywood and Cobbs 1831: 125). Any disputes over survey boundaries, if taken to court, would trigger a second survey of the land in question (Haywood and Cobbs 1831: 122). Both districts had well-laid-out legal means for white settlers to obtain land starting from the point at which each respective district

became public lands within the State of Tennessee, but reality did not always match with legal precedent.

Blount County deeds and early 20th-century injunctions for that same land do not mention any previous surveys. While the State granted and sold plots to landowners, surveys seem to have been completed after the purchase was made. Many grants to individual farmers, as part of common practice, gave 640 acres to each adult grantee and 320 acres to each child (Alley and Sowell 2016: 11). But it was also possible to obtain much larger grants. These larger grants could cause legal problems for landowners. Court documents from the late 19th and early 20th centuries often call for re-surveys of older grants and debate the location of important survey markers. Said survey markers were usually vague in the first place, based on a specific cluster of rocks or a certain tree. Likewise, the haphazard nature of land speculation in the region in the late 18th century had consequences for the descendants of those early settlers in the 20th century.

To further complicate matters, there is a common law doctrine wherein “a person in possession of land owned by someone else may acquire valid title to it, so long as certain common law requirements are met” (Jurkowski 2017: “Adverse Possession”). This practice was solidified in Tennessee State law, which states that:

“any person having had, either personally or through those through whom that person’s claim arises . . . seven (7) years’ adverse possession of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, granted by this state or the state of North Carolina . . . without any claim by action at law or in equity . . . is vested with a good and indefeasible title in fee to the land described in such person’s assurance of title” (Tennessee Code Annotated 2019).

The requirements of adverse possession also encompass continuous, hostile, open and notorious, actual, and exclusive possession of the land in question. To start, the seven years noted in the statute of limitations must be continuous. To fulfill hostile possession, the property owner cannot have permitted the inhabitant to be there, but the inhabitant must be openly living on the land. In the Smoky Mountains, open and notorious possession was accomplished by building houses and improving the land via clearing it and planting gardens. Actual and exclusive possession also revolve around actually possessing the land. Fulfilling these terms and remaining in place until the statute of limitations ran out qualified as actual possession, which meant people could obtain deeds without necessarily going through the land office. In other cases, where the property in question had an invalid “document evidencing title” (Cornell Law School 2020: “Color of Title”) the statute of limitations extended to twenty years of adverse possession. The combination of unsurveyed land and the legal doctrine of adverse possession is important to understanding why property ownership worked the way it did in the Smoky Mountains. Or, rather, the way property ownership did not work.

The lack of attention to keeping property ownership straight in the Smokies indicates the area was not one people like absentee landowners or the state government cared about. The presentation of the region as a wilderness populated by Native Americans in travel documents like Timberlake’s likely deterred settlers in the 18th century. Further, while settlers in the 19th century were able to obtain 640-acre plots, fertile farmland was not readily available. Otherwise mountainous and hilly terrain was broken up by coves – weathered-down windows in Precambrian

rock – and the miles and miles of rivers crisscrossing the region. There was a reason any settlements in the Southern Appalachians tended to lie on the floodplains of the rivers and streams and in places like Cades Cove. Farmers were interested in good land. They did not want to expend the effort terracing and tilling rocky mountain soil when more amenable cove soil was available.

Deed in hand or not, people still came to the area in search of good farmland. People still bought the land – even the highlands, though for reasons unexplained in the 19th-century injunctions. Ronald Lewis talks about how in Virginia, excluding land from the public domain was a condition to the state ratifying the Articles of Confederation, which resulted in the lands west of the Blue Ridge being divided into estates held by speculators who “kept prices too high for ordinary homesteaders” (1998: 85). However, this happened in the 1790s and would not have been the case in Tennessee. It is possible, however, that the same idea about minimizing the public domain and profiteering speculators applied as many of the people that owned the mountainous land outside of the places like Cades Cove where farming was possible were absentee landowners. Some of these landowners lived as close as Knox County, while others lived in places like Ohio and Alabama. These people also owned much larger tracts than the typical farmer, usually upwards of 5,000 acres. From various depositions, it seems as if few of these absentee landowners ever visited their land or even knew the correct bounds of it. The Wilson Map (Fig. 14) attests to the extent of unknown and/or uncertain tract boundaries. The overlapping grants attest to the unfamiliarity with the area and how the same land was being bought and sold multiple times. Land speculators and landowners did not

care what land they were buying, just that they were buying it. These landowners added to existing problems with the farmers and settlers gaining title through adverse possession or purchasing unsurveyed lands in the area in the 1820s – years before the first big grant owners start buying land. The result is boxes upon boxes of injunctions, lawsuits, and letters back-and-forth to lawyers as locals and the Little River Lumber Company desperately tried to sort out who owned what. But to get to the desperate sorting, we have to go back to the 1830s, when lands in both the Hiwassee District and the District South of the Holston and French Broad were available for purchase and a man named Drury P Armstrong, of Knoxville, Tennessee, was in charge of the East Tennessee Land Office.

DP Armstrong was acting register for the land office from at least 1822, when he appears in Blount Country Deed Books, acting as a witness for the sale of enslaved people between two other prominent landowners, Hugh W Dunlap and John McGhee. While working in the land office in the late 1830s, he started buying land and, acting as Register, “had entries for this vast area of land made in the name of members of his family and others and had those entries transferred to him and Grants issued in his name” (Abstract I 1912: 4). This was technically fraud, but the Tennessee Supreme Court allowed it. Certainly, no one seems to have challenged Armstrong. Armstrong was a wealthy man in a public position, though, which might be the primary reason no one challenged his purchase of the land until decades later. In a few short years, though, Armstrong amassed nearly 40,000 acres in the Smoky Mountains, much of which remained undeveloped and legally uninhabited until the early 20th century. The Armstrong Grants in Sevier County compromise a

large portion of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Understanding the histories of the Armstrong Grants and other tracts can help us understand the relationships between local people and absentee landowners; locals, landowners, and lumber companies; and lumber companies and the National Park Service. Here, I delve into the title chains of three tracts later incorporated into the GRSM, one of which was an Armstrong Grant.

Hitchcock 6,675 Acres

Drury P Armstrong died in 1856, and his two sons started selling off his land. One 5,000-acre tract that covered what is now Elkmont was transferred to a man named Peter M Hitchcock from Ohio in 1884. When the tract changed hands for the first time, it was missing several smaller tracts that had been obtained by local men. One hundred and twenty acres were in the hands of a Will Trentham, and another 100 acres had been issued to a Will Huskey (Abstract I 1912: 6). Hitchcock sold the land in 1901 to Appalachian Lumber Company, a precursor to Little River Lumber Company. They, in turn, sold to LRLC in 1912, shortly before the company started timbering in Elkmont. By the time the Hitchcock Tract appears on the Little River Lumber Company map, it had grown to over 6,600 acres. This is the most straightforward chain of title regarding the Hitchcock Tract (Table 3).

Disputes over who owned the land began in 1892 when Hitchcock filed an “Original Bill of Ejectment and to Quit Title” (Abstract I 1912: 17) against Southern Iron and Timber Company, a smaller timber industry chartered in Cocke County,

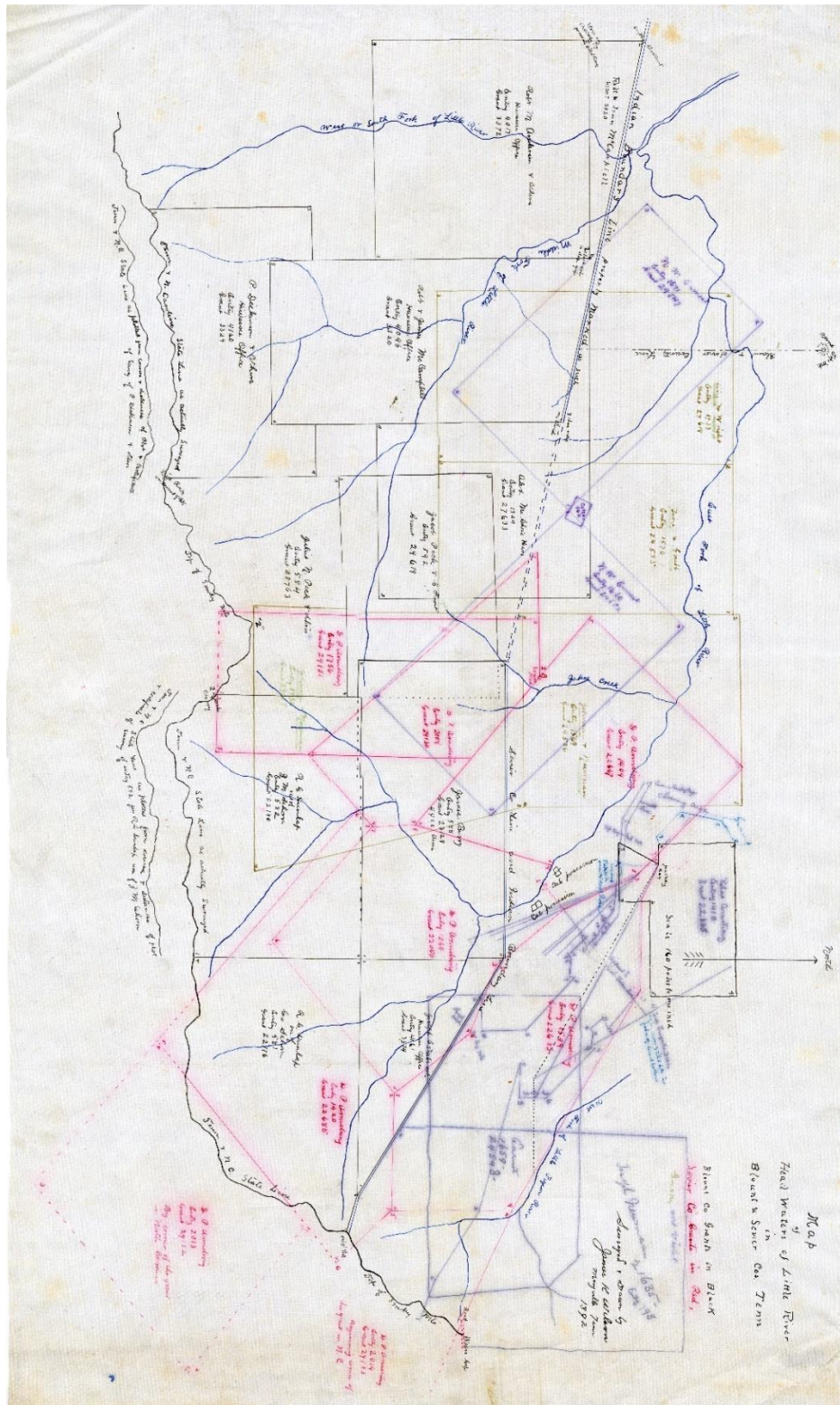


FIGURE 15. Survey Map of the Smoky Mountains by James K Wilson, 1892.
(Courtesy GRSM National Park Archives, Townsend, TN.)

Tennessee, by two Pennsylvania men in 1890 (State of Tennessee 1891: 593). That same year, Southern Iron and Timber was reported to be building a railroad from Newport, Tennessee, “thence up Pigeon River to the state line between Tennessee and North Carolina” to mine “a fine vein of brown hematite ore” and manganese (*Railway World* 1890: 1194). In attempting to do so, they claimed they purchased Grant No. 21635, issued to a Joseph Newman. This was one of those grants issued either at the same time as the Armstrong Grant or shortly thereafter. Both Newman Grants – labeled as the Johnson and Newman Grants on the 1892 Wilson Map – overlaid Armstrong Grants, which is what begged the question of who had the superior title.

The details of this case are hazy, as “the original papers [were] all lost” (Abstract I 1912: 22) when the Blount County Courthouse at Maryville, Tennessee, burned in 1906 (Tennessee Secretary of State 2008). At some point, the transcript of the case was “taken from the Office [of the Supreme Court at Knoxville] and cannot be found” (Abstract I 1912: 22). The only surviving papers related to the case are in LRLC’s books. The deed book I looked at noted that several grants had been filed on top of what the court ruled as the original DP Armstrong Grant – the Hitchcock Tract as of 1892 – and the final ruling on the superior title was confusing. Hitchcock was declared by the Blount County court – not the Sevier County Court, where the original title was issued and the physical tract was located – “to have the Superior title to all the land covered by Grants Nos. 22050 and 22677 [two DP Armstrong Grants], lying North of the Indian Boundary Line and the James Berry Grant No.23128 and also to have Superior title to all land covered by Grant No. 22683”

| Date | Transfer of Title | Price |
|-----------|---|----------|
| 1832-1856 | Drury P Armstrong obtained approximately 40,000 of land in East Tennessee while Register of the Land Office Armstrong distributed land between sons Robert H and Marcellus M Armstrong | |
| 1884 | Armstrong's sons sold 5,000 acres– combination of Grant Nos. 22050, 22677, and 22683 – to Peter M Hitchcock | \$12,690 |
| 1892 | Hitchcock sued Southern Iron and Timber Company to stop construction of a railroad Sevier County Court ruled that Armstrong Grant was superior to Johnson and Newman Grants, owned by Southern Iron and Timber | |
| 1901 | Hitchcock sold tract to Appalachian Lumber Company | |
| 1912 | Appalachian Lumber Company sold tract to LRLC | |

TABLE 3: A Timeline of Ownership of the Hitchcock Tract

(Abstract I 1912: 28). This ruling did not, however, include the land covered by the Joseph Newman Grant No. 21635. The overlap was ruled to not be part of the Hitchcock Tract, and it seems as if Southern Iron and Timber won land – the injunction does not specify how much – in that case. What they did with the land and whether they finished their railroad is unknown, though success was unlikely because after the case was settled there was no further mention of Southern Iron and Timber in the abstracts. One newspaper reported the company failed in 1893, shortly after the Hitchcock lawsuit was settled (*The Insurance Press* 1898: 3), but no

mention is made of what happened to the land they won.¹⁵ Hitchcock appears to have won the overlap area that initially reverted to the Newman Grant at some point, too, because in 1901 he sold the acreage he lost in 1892 to Little River Lumber Company (Abstract I 1912: 31). Even with an initially clear chain of title from the 1830s to 1912, the Hitchcock Tract was subject to legal questions and arguments about its legitimacy thanks to overlapping grants.

Caldwell 6149 Acres

Another important tract in the context of this survey was the Caldwell Tract, which encompassed the Middle Prong of the Little River near Tremont (Table 4). There are actually two Caldwell Tracts – a 6,000-acre tract and a 3,000-acre tract – both of which were issued to the same two men, and a James McCampbell. The 6,000-acre Caldwell Tract encompasses Tremont. Robert and James McCampbell obtained the Caldwell Tract, Hiwassee Grant No. 3320, from the state in 1831. They deeded the land to Isaac Anderson – one of the owners of the Anderson Tract, discussed below – in 1847 for \$150. Anderson then sold the land back to the McCampbells and John Caldwell in 1859 for a small profit. In 1875, AP McCampbell, “the Administrator of Robert McCampbell, deceased,” (Abstract V 1912: 47) and James A Caldwell went to court to try to settle Robert McCampbell’s estate and partition the Caldwell Tract. Several lawsuits ensued as the heirs of John

¹⁵ Presumably, the information is in Cocke County records, but I did not check Cocke County since they were outside my geographical purview. The original grants were filed in Sevier County, so I am not sure where these deeds went, but they might be in Cocke County.

McC Campbell and James McC Campbell joined the fight over the estate. The Sevier County Court eventually ruled that James McC Campbell, Robert McC Campbell, and James A Caldwell had dissolved their partnership on 30 Aug 1859 and that James A Caldwell was owed \$1200, “which was to be paid out of the proceeds of said land as soon as the same could be realized” (Abstract V 1912: 47). The county seized the

| Date | Transfer of Title | Price |
|------|--|--------------------------|
| 1831 | Robert and James McC Campbell obtained Hiwassee Grant 3320 and 3321 from State of Tennessee | |
| 1847 | McC Campbells sold tract to Isaac Anderson | \$150 |
| 1859 | Anderson sold tract to McC Campbells and John Caldwell | \$219 |
| 1859 | James McC Campbell, Robert McC Campbell, and James A Caldwell dissolved partnership and divided shares of the Caldwell Tract | |
| 1875 | AP McC Campbell, Robert McC Campbell's estate administrator partitioned tract with James A Caldwell Caldwell won the Caldwell tract | \$825 |
| 1885 | Caldwell sued Will Walker and others for land they claimed years before through adverse possession | |
| 1890 | Caldwell sold tract to Bloomfield, Wheeler, and Mitchell Caldwell Tract divided in two | \$14,160 |
| 1900 | Bloomfield, Wheeler, and Mitchell sold tract to English Lumber Company English Lumber company sold all land to RH Sansom RH Sansom sold English Lumber Company lands to LRLC | \$50,000 \$76,620 |

TABLE 4: A Timeline of Ownership of the Caldwell Tracts

land and the county clerk sold both tracts back to James A Caldwell for \$825 “without survey” (Abstract V 1912: 48).

Having won these 9,000-acre total tracts, Caldwell filed an ejectment bill in the Blount County Chancery Court in 1885 against Will Walker, Jacob Freshour, Daniel Meyers, and several other locals. He claimed that they were trespassing on the 9,000 acres he won from the Sevier County Court and that they needed to relinquish the property they claimed and leave. However, the county court recognized Walker, Freshour, Meyers, and the others had claimed their individual 200 acres of land and “perfected title to the same” by continuous possession of the land (Abstract V 1912: 49). Any claims these local men made to land other than the 200 acres to which they had perfected title were ruled as void because their claims under a different set of state grants – which do not appear at all on the 1892 Wilson Map – were not superior to the original titles given by the State of Tennessee to Robert and James McCampbell (Abstract V 1912: 49). As a result of this ruling, James A Caldwell lost several hundred acres to local farmers.

In 1890, Caldwell sold the Caldwell tract to a party called Bloomfield, Wheeler, and Mitchell for \$14,160 in cash, after deducting the land he lost via adverse possession as well as another 444-acre tract called White Oak Grove (Abstract V 1912: 51) and dividing the 9,000-acre grant into the 6,600- and 3,000-acre portions. A handwritten note in the Little River Lumber Company abstracts states that Bloomfield, Wheeler, and Mitchell sold the Caldwell Tracts to English Lumber Company in 1900. That same year, JL English sold the tract to RH Sansom, Trustee, (Abstract V 1912: 51) along with seven other tracts of land totaling 25,440

acres purchased from the same Bloomfield, Wheeler, and Mitchell “for the consideration of \$50,000” (Abstract V 1912: 60). Sansom then sold the English Lumber Company land to Little River Lumber Company the same day he purchased it from the lumber company. “for the consideration of \$76,620, one half of which is paid in cash and the balance of \$38,310 evidenced by three promissory notes of even date due 12 months after date payable one for \$22,500, one for \$10,000 and one for \$5,810 conveys to the LRLC the eight tracts of land conveyed to him in section XII Supra” (Abstract V 1912: 61).

Stanley Anderson 4411³/₄ Acres

The Stanley Anderson Tract, also known as the Anderson Stanley Tract in the LRLC abstracts and the Anderson Tract on the LRLC Map, is the most relevant to the question of possessory cabins and encompasses the third main area where I conducted my preliminary survey (Table 5). The Anderson Tract encompassed a portion of the West Prong of the Little River, just east of Cades Cove, and was originally part of the Hiwassee District. Three brothers, Robert, Isaac, and Samuel Anderson, and another man, David Palmer, purchased the 5,000-acre tract from the State of Tennessee in 1830. Palmer pulled out of the land deal in 1832 before the land was surveyed and gave his share to the three brothers. The deed was not issued until 1838.

Isaac Anderson died intestate in 1856 and left his 1/3 share to his brother Samuel’s children, Isaac and Rebecca. Samuel also left his 1/3 share to his children. The second Isaac Anderson died intestate and his share went to his sister Rebecca,

who now had 2/3 interest in the tract of land. She left her share to her two daughters who then “deeded their 2/3 interest in this tract of land to CC Jones” in 1884 for about \$2,000 (Grigg 1911: 26). That same year, Jones, the owner of 2/3 interest in the Anderson tract, filed an ejectment bill against Will Walker “and various other parties who were claiming to own a part or portion of this tract of land” (Grigg 1911: 34). This is the same Will Walker that James A Caldwell sued in 1885, but this suit was filed against different 200 acres. These are the 200 acres noted on the LRLC map in the northeast corner of the Anderson Tract. But while Walker’s 200 acres are noted on the LRLC map, demonstrating some legitimacy to Walker’s claim, he lost his 1884 case against CC Jones, and “the Court further decreed that the Complainants were entitled to the possession of the same [5,000-acre tract] and that a writ of possession . . . put them in possession of said tract of land” (Grigg 1911: 35). Having won his case and obtained a writ of possession, Jones sold his 2/3 interest in the Anderson tract to George Cowlam in 1889 who then sold half of the 2/3 interest – 1/3 of the total tract – to JC and RS Stanley a month later. Cowlam sold the rest of his interest in the Anderson Tract to Adolph Montandon in 1889, as well.

Robert Anderson, the last of the original owners of the Anderson Tract, died sometime before 1890 and split his 1/3 interest between his three children. One of the children, also named Isaac Anderson, “transfer[ed] his 1/3 of 1/3 interest in this tract of land, being a 1/9 interest to James K Wilson,” (Grigg 1911: 26) who was the same James K Wilson who drew the Wilson Map in 1892. Wilson then “execute[d] a title bond to this 1/9 interest in this tract of land to [English Lumber Company]” in

1899 (Grigg 1911: 26). The other 2/3 of Robert M Anderson's original 1/3 share were split between Robert M Anderson's daughter and three grandchildren, so each received 1/27 interest in the total Anderson Tract.

In 1900, JC and RS Stanley sued the remaining Anderson heirs and English Lumber Company for their shares in the Anderson Tract, and the case went to the Blount County court. Because "said tract of land [was] so situated and of such character and description that the same [could not] be equitably partitioned between the parties in interest and that it [was] manifestly for the interest of all the parties that said tract of land be sold for partition rather than divided in kind" (Grigg 1911: 210). Doing so took the 2/3 of the tract the Stanleys did not own out of the hands of the other owners.

That same year, the Stanleys sued a man named AJ Dorsey, "who seems to have been a squatter upon said tract of land" (Grigg 1911: 41). In Dorsey's case, "the Court further decreed that the defendant, AJ Dorsey, who was in possession of a part of land exercising the acts of ownership over the same and that he had no valid title or claim in said land and that his pretended title or claim was void as against the true title herein-before adjudged by the Court" (Grigg 1911: 41) and he was removed. The reason the court found Dorsey's claim to possession insufficient when compared with Will Walker's claims are not stated with the injunction, but Dorsey was removed from the Anderson Tract, the title to the tract was cleared, and the land was sold back to Blount County for partition. The Stanleys bought the entire Anderson Tract for \$10,000 in 1900, except for the 200 acres in the northeast corner

| Date | Transfer of Title | Price |
|------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1830 | Robert, Isaac, and Samuel Anderson and David Palmer bought Anderson tract – Grant No. 3372 – from State of Tennessee | |
| 1832 | David Palmer withdrew from land deal, tract divided between the three brothers | |
| 1856 | Isaac Anderson left his 1/3 share to Samuel's two children, Isaac and Rebecca Samuel left his 1/3 share to his two children | |
| | Isaac Anderson II left his portion of the tract to his sister Rebecca Anderson-Caldwell had 2/3 interest in the Anderson tract Rebecca Anderson-Caldwell left her 2/3 interest to her two daughters | |
| 1884 | Rebecca Anderson's daughters deeded their interest to CC Jones CC Jones attempted to eject Will Walker from the Anderson Tract and won | \$2,000 |
| 1889 | CC Jones sold his interest to George Cowlam George Cowlam sold 1/3 of total interest to JC and RS Stanley George Cowlam sold other 1/3 total interest to Adolph Montandon | \$4,800 \$4,800 \$4,800 |
| 1890 | Robert Anderson split his 1/3 interest between his three children: Isaac Anderson III, Mary E Anderson-Caughron, and three grandchildren Isaac Anderson III sold 1/3 of 1/3 interest to James K Wilson, surveyor | |
| 1898 | Charles T Cates, Back Tax Attorney for Blount County seized and sold Montandon's 1/3 share to JC and RS Stanley | |
| 1899 | James K Wilson sold his 1/9 interest to English Lumber Company | \$100 |
| 1900 | JC and RS Stanley sued for full ownership of Anderson Tract and won JC and RS Stanley sued to eject AJ Dorsey from Anderson Tract and won | \$10,000 |
| 1901 | JC and RS Stanley sold tract to RH Sansom | \$10,800 |
| 1902 | RH Sansom sold tract to LRLC | \$14,400 |

TABLE 5: A Timeline of Ownership of the Anderson Tract

of the tract claimed by Will Walker. While the 1884 lawsuit mentions Will Walker as having possession of these 200 acres, he does not appear in LRLC's deed abstracts.

RH Sansom, Trustee, appeared again in 1901 in possession of the Anderson Tract, presumably purchased from the Stanleys. The 1901 deed stated that Sansom purchased the Anderson Tract for \$10,800 and then sold it to Little River Lumber Company a year later for over \$14,000.

Unlike other Smoky Mountain grants, the chain of ownership for the Anderson Tract is easy to trace compared to the others, thanks to a few factors. Aside from the drama of the 1/27 shares of interest in the tract and a few squatters, everything was straightforward. No one ever questioned the bounds of the Anderson Tract – likely because it laid squarely within Blount County – no other grants were issued on top of it, and it was surveyed before deeds were issued, something that did not happen with the other two tracts discussed above. Unlike the Hitchcock Tract, the Andersons were a local family, at least compared with other landowners. The first Isaac Anderson was the same Reverend Isaac Anderson who founded Maryville College. Like Drury P Armstrong, though, the Andersons did not live on their land and instead seem to have lived and died in the vicinity of Maryville. The Stanleys and RH Sansom were land agents who bought and sold land in the Smokies for profit. As seen in the previous two tracts, interest in the land increased as land agents who drove up prices for the land entered the area ahead of the lumber companies.

The trouble with tracts in the Smoky Mountains proved to be an issue in the early stages of the movement to transform the Smokies into Federal lands. A push from 1911 to 1916 to make the Smokies a National Forest fell through because “land titles . . . were too shaky and questionable to be accepted by the Government” (Frome 1966: 178). By the 1920s, however, the pressure and desire to create a National Park was so great, previous issues seem to have been settled or bypassed entirely. The fight to remove locals from the landscape was a long one. One Cades Cove man, John W Oliver, a descendant of the John Oliver who settled there in 1819, kept the Park Service in court for seven years to reverse NPS’s condemnation of his land (Frome 1966: 196). Certainly, the park movement was aided by the fact that 85% of the land that would become the GRSM was owned by timber companies (Frome 1966: 173). These companies spent much of the first two decades of the 20th century securing their titles to land they planned to log and establishing less questionable chains of title to land in the Smokies than the Federal Government encountered in 1911.

Other Claims to Land in the Smokies

Thinking about land ownership in the Smoky Mountains between the arrival of the first white settlers and Little River Lumber Company sets the stage for the legal actions the lumber company took to secure timber rights in the 19th and 20th centuries. Understanding where people were and how they moved through the landscape and negotiated with parties from outside the local communities and the region can offer insight into the daily lives of mountaineers. Additionally, looking at

these deed abstracts offers insight into the evolution of what was considered valuable land. To farmers, the mountain land outside the coves was not desirable. The geography was too steep and the soil too poor or rocky to justify cultivation. To outsiders who were interested in the better incorporation of Appalachia into the nation, the mountainous land, rugged and covered in trees, was considered wilderness both because it was unsuitable for agriculture and because of the ever-evolving concept of wilderness. It was not valuable until the timber industry took an interest. The spurts of lawsuits filed when big tracts changed hands points to the fact that these absentee landowners did not care about the land they possessed, just that they possessed it. This is one of the more blatant examples of the commodification of nature here. To landowners from outside the region, land in the Smokies was not a place; it was real estate, and the only thing that mattered about it was a piece of paper and what monetary value they could eke out of it by trading it. Title issues were of great interest to lawyers, who could spend years detangling titles (Brown 2000: 56). Additionally, speculation on plots with unclear titles, at times, was “almost as profitable as logging” for people who could sell a tract multiple times to different companies and other speculators (Brown 2000: 56).

This phenomenon is most apparent when looking at the increasing prices of land. After the 1880s, when the first lumber companies started to enter the area, there are large jumps in the apparent value of the tracts, likely because of the economic value of the extant natural resources and increased demand for those resources. For example, the first time the Caldwell Tract changed hands in 1847, it sold for \$4,500 in today's dollars. When James A Caldwell bought the tract back

from the Sevier County clerk, he paid nearly \$20,000. He sold it to the land agents in 1890 for almost \$400,000 in today's money. These prices were far out of the league of people like Will Walker, AJ Dorsey, and other locals who were already established on the land in question. However, the adverse possession law and the confusion the grant titles caused gave locals some protection from absentee landowners. The lack of attention directed toward tracts often made it easier to inhabit and improve smaller plots of land, as Will Walker did. The fact that Will Walker survived so many lawsuits with portions of the land he improved intact shows that the law, in some cases, could benefit the mountaineers.

But the confusion surrounding the large land grants was not always on the side of the mountaineers. If the courts decided one grant was superior, subsequent legal challenges could fall flat (Morrell 1930). Whether mountaineers could challenge the absentee landowners was based on James K Wilson's 1892 map. While one could argue the Armstrong Grants should always have the superior title because of their age, their legitimacy was challenged in court over and over. The fact that Armstrong's claims to these amassed 40,000 acres were dodgy at best is one reason they were so often challenged. But their legitimacy, as well as the legitimacy of any other large land grant in the Smoky Mountains, was easy to challenge for several reasons. The Wilson Map demonstrates several points of contention often brought up in court documents. First, there are three sets of overlapping grants in Sevier County alone that are all color-coordinated. The DP Armstrong Grants are outlined in red. The green grants in Sevier County seem to have been the second set issued, if not concurrently with the Armstrong Grants. The violet grants on the

Wilson Map seem to have been the third set and appear the least in deeds and court records, which might mean their legitimacy was the easiest to dismiss. The Armstrong Grants also cross both the county and state lines. Armstrong obtained these lands during a time in which “there seems to have been a difference of opinion as to where the County line . . . was located” (Abstract I 1912: 6) and the state line was misplaced when surveying other grants (Wilson 1892). Whether this was the result of landowners and land speculators trying to maximize their holdings, mismeasurement, or a mistake that occurred because it was genuinely difficult to reach the state line is uncertain, but not knowing the location of an important boundary made locating survey points and property boundaries based on its location difficult.

Additionally, it was not unheard of for state governments to lose grant information. Durwood Dunn noted that an original 1794 grant for Cades Cove issued to Hugh Dunlap was “lost from the secretary’s office in North Carolina” (1988: 5). The Dunlap Grant then had to be reissued from the state of Tennessee in 1809 (Dunn 1988: 5). Survey techniques at the time also aided local men in claiming land on these grants as their own. The Wilson Map is one surviving example of how variable property lines could be. For individual farmers,

“mapping and checking deeds for many tracts of land was made difficult by the rather general practice of describing boundaries by reference to vague or non-permanent ‘markers.’ . . . [M]any descriptions of boundaries that could scarcely be followed or even located a few years after they were written. In one deed one side of the property followed the stream ‘down to where an old sow swam the river.’ Another followed a certain road from an established corner ‘to the fifth row of corn.’ [Still other deeds] used the orthodox ‘metes and bounds’ of the surveyors and civil engineers” (Campbell 1960: 70-71).

This is apparent in one notation on the Wilson Map, where Wilson marked the absence of a specific tree and the presence instead of a pile of rocks at the northwest corner of the Anderson Grant. These survey markers were important for a long time but required surveyors and landowners to have a level of familiarity with the landscape.

Partible inheritance was another potential place for error. The Anderson Tract is a prime example of how partible inheritance could get messy. However, in that case, the inheritors seemed able to keep track of their shares well enough. It was only the presence of the two speculators that caused a problem. This practice was likely not a problem for absentee landowners like those in the tracts described above, but it could cause problems for farmers. In Cades Cove, generational ownership of the same plots of land and its subdivision into smaller and smaller pieces of property that followed “elaborate kinship structure[s]” (Dunn 1988: 71) meant subsistence agriculture became more difficult over time. While this would have made life more difficult for inhabitants of the Smoky Mountains, it is less likely that locals who were familiar with their land had the same issues with boundaries as the absentee landowners.

Locals would have run into trouble with the courts when registering their claims with the county or state. While absentee land ownership meant it was probably relatively easy to claim and improve two hundred acres for seven years before anyone noticed, proving legal ownership after that statute of limitations up could be difficult. For the original inhabitants of Cades Cove, the question of original deeds of ownership was complicated by the fact that many of the first settlers in the

Smokies did not register their land when they settled. Because life “remained very tentative on the frontier,” and there was uncertainty about whether a family would remain, settlers sometimes did not bother to obtain deeds until years later (Dunn 1988: 11). For example, one of the first deeds in Cades Cove, “laid down for George Snider” was not filed until 1825, six years after Snider claimed the land (Blount County Deeds 1833: 78). John Oliver did the same thing, not “bother[ing] to obtain legal title to his land until 1826” (Dunn 1988: 11). Dunn further asserts that some Cades Cove inhabitants did not register their deeds until after the Civil War (Dunn 1988: 11).

The earliest deeds for Cades Cove and Tuckaleechee Cove act as counterpoints to the large land grants elsewhere in the Smokies. Many of the grants in the early deed books from the county deal with small tracts of land, often less than 100 acres, and cash transactions between settlers. Blount County’s deed books reveal that partible inheritance was not an informal process and transactions were, seemingly, conducted with far less drama than with the absentee landowners. The tracts in the Smokies were also confined to the good farmland in the coves and foothills and mostly along waterways like the Little River. The early deeds, however, also still have the same issue as the big tracts in the highlands, having borders based on the bounds of other adjacent tracts. Deed Number 803, for example, was for “160 acres on the waters of Abrams Creek, adjacent the Creek, corner to lots #21, 22, 23, corner to AB Wiseman” (Blount County Deeds 1833: 104). Determining the bounds of this lot necessitated familiarity with the local landscape and other landowners. This was presumably the case here, as the seller was Thomas Tipton, a

member of one of the first families in Cades Cove, who sold the plot James Sparks, another early settler, with witnesses from the community.

Different parties also made verbal contracts on occasion. They functioned on a local scale, but when absentee landowners were involved, these contracts could cause problems in terms of property ownership. One 1895 court case in which an absentee landowner, George A Hill, sued several individuals as well as a small lumber company, notes at least three verbal contracts for property ownership. The 1896 deposition of JF Walker in a different case attested that “under our verbal contract we were to go [to a plot of AM Line’s land, which encompassed the area between the East and Middle Forks of the Little River] and clear what we wanted to and have it rent free for five years. . . . We claimed under Line and those who have been claiming under him” (JF Walker Deposition 1896). In this case, JF Walker’s possession of land on one of the Line Grants – probably the Line and Smith Grant, though this is not specified, given that the lawsuit also concerns a corner of an Armstrong Grant – was not adverse possession but rather stemmed from a verbal agreement. The trouble came when George A Hill claimed a portion of the Line and Smith Grant overlapped a portion of the Armstrong Grant that he owned. The other defendants in the case, when asked by the court “which of said possessions are on the lands sued for,” answered “I don’t know where the lines are” (HH King Deposition 1896). The inhabitants were confused. The lawyers and surveyors were confused. And this was typical for this region.

When Little River Lumber Company entered the region in 1901 and started purchasing land with short and incomplete paper trails attached to it, it was met with

resistance in the form of lawsuits. Most of these lawsuits were filed by and against absentee landowners due to the issues with deeds detailed above. George A Hill, for example, sued Little River Lumber Company for attempting to buy the Line and Smith Grant which was at the center of the case that had just been settled. Townsend won and incorporated Hill's land into LRLC's growing property. A few locals also filed their own suits against LRLC, though they were not always successful (See Dunn and Jackson 1927). Will Walker also famously refused to sell his land to Townsend until he died. Even when Townsend got the land he wanted from Walker, it came with stipulations (Brown 2000: 55). The company could not clear-cut the land near Tremont, so until Townsend himself died in 1936, the purchase was, arguably, more related to controlling the people than controlling access to the timber itself.

WB Townsend did not want to be perpetually embroiled in lawsuits, so he had his lawyers compile and keep careful records of the deeds and their histories in multi-volume abstracts of titles now in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Archives. Though the deeds and their abstracts are thorough, they are also biased. The Drury P Armstrong Grants are given more weight than the other two sets of grants, and in the tracts attached to these grants, there are noticeably fewer court cases wherein farmers won their court case against absentee landowners. All the abstracts are geared towards upholding Armstrong Grants. And while several injunctions reference Little River Lumber Company losing previous cases to people like Will Walker, the injunctions themselves are missing from the books. It is possible that Townsend deliberately left these out of his records, and this move was made

more convenient when the Blount County Courthouse burned and the original records were lost.

Possessory Cabins

In gathering deeds and tracing clear lines of title, WB Townsend established his legal ownership of LRLC land. On paper, Townsend was in control, but the physical presence of the mountaineers coupled with well-known examples demonstrating the power of adverse possession led Townsend to take additional steps to secure control over the land. The company also followed the local example and established physical possession of the land. From 1915, Little River Lumber Company constructed sixty possessory cabins in various places on company land. These cabins were enumerated and described in a deposition by Andy Gregory, a land agent for Townsend. The purpose of the cabins was to combat some of the problems previous landowners had encountered with mountaineers. In building the cabins, LRLC was following a model used by the other large lumber companies in the Smoky Mountains. Champion Fiber Company, based on the North Carolina side of the mountains, owned land in both North Carolina and Tennessee. They never logged the land they owned in Tennessee due to the high cost of accessing the spruce at the highest elevations and because the National Park was established before they could do so (Frome 1966: 196-198). But they did maintain their possession of the Tennessee lands via possessory cabins. The company established “residents in cabins on the mountains” and said residents “maintain[ed] a patrol over the lands” to make sure no one else could take adverse possession of

Champion's property (Lambert 1958: 60). Champion Fiber Company also employed locals to inhabit the cabins for short periods, rotating between cabins to make sure all was well. One local man, Louis McCarter who did some contract work for LRLC also worked for Champion Fiber Company. When he acted as a "caretaker for Champion," he monitored company land possessions not currently being logged. In the course of his job, he regularly walked from the Sugarlands to Alum Cave Bluffs and then to Mount LeConte or Clingman's Dome (Parton, Bradley, et al 1958: 43).

Little River Lumber Company did the same thing as Champion in hiring caretakers to rotate between various cabins on various tracts to maintain possession of the land and report monthly on the "condition of all these possessions as they found them" (Gregory 1926: 14). The empty cabins were also kept locked up "so far as possible in order to make the possession of these cabins come within the law as an adverse possession" (Gregory 1926: 14). The small garden and temporary occupancy were enough in the eyes of the law to qualify as possession (Brewer 1975). Andy Gregory, the author of the possessory cabin deposition, was one of those men doing the equivalent of McCarter's job for LRLC. Temporary residence explains why 17 of the 69 cabins listed in Gregory's deposition were specified as containing "beds, camp supplies and cooking utensils at all times" (1926: 3). They were not actual households. The possessory cabins containing camping supplies or having no designated function are also associated with small lots – usually one acre or less – differentiating them from the possessory cabins rented out to families. Inhabited possessory cabins were associated with larger plots averaging about four

acres, but they could reach up to 25 acres. These plots could more realistically support one or more inhabitants year-round.

Townsend recognized the problems other landowners had had with people taking advantage of the adverse possession laws as well as the perpetual confusion with overlapping grants. His reliance on the DP Armstrong grants indicates he needed them to have superior title to maintain his holdings, which would explain why the tracts on the LRLC Map match with the tracts on the Wilson Map. The Armstrong grants were also largely recognized by Sevier and Blount County Courts as having the superior titles because of the age of the deeds, even if they were filed under less-than-legal circumstances. By having his company's abstract books trace his title claims back to Armstrong, Townsend established the legitimacy of his land ownership. The two possessory cabins on park record are seemingly all that is left of this attempt to control the land. While Andy Gregory penned a description for each LRLC cabin he recorded in 1926, he offered no clues as to where they were located, save for notations that some were on public pass ways. Gregory did not reference any geographical markers outside of the pass ways and the acreage associated most of the cabins, which makes determining the location of each cabin from his descriptions alone difficult.

Despite my attempt at tracing the land tracts to understand them, I could not find any isolated home sites on either the Caldwell or Hitchcock Tracts, and the identities of the cabins on the Anderson Tract are still unknown. Gregory's description of the cabins lends no clues as to where they were, save for notations that some are on public pass ways. Gregory does not reference any geographical

markers outside of the pass ways and their acreage, which makes determining where each cabin was from his descriptions alone difficult.

In 2009, Erik Kreusch, the GRSM archaeologist at the time, located two of these possessory cabins on the Anderson Tract while conducting compliance work for hiking trail improvements.¹⁶ The remains of these two cabins represent two of the five possessory cabins (Table 6) that Gregory recorded on the Anderson Tract: Number 38, the Dorsey Place Possession; Number 39, the Ledbetter or Old George Seaton Place; Number 26, the Stocking Hollow Improvement; and Number 53, the Meyers Cabin. Number 42 is listed twice in Gregory's deposition, both under the Anderson Tract and the 6,000-acre Caldwell Tract. I am not sure if this was a mistake on Gregory's part or if the cabin was on the border between the two tracts. The description of the cabin on the Anderson tract is partially illegible, but Number 42 on the Caldwell Tract was called the Harrison Moore Possession. Both appear to have been leased by LRLC and inhabited continually for several years. All the cabins on the Anderson Tract – and, indeed, the rest of the LRLC possessory cabins – were abandoned in the 1920s by their inhabitants. Cal Ledbetter leased Numbers 38 and 39 in the late 1910s, and Numbers 26 and 53 did not house anybody. Gregory does not describe the cabins themselves or their sites beyond the acreage associated with the cabins, so it is difficult to tell which cabin is which. However, based on a few clues from Gregory's deposition, we can make some inferences about which cabin is which.

¹⁶ Despite being on a 4,000-acre tract, the two cabins are not that far from each other.

Cabin Number 38, the Dorsey Place Possession, was located “on a public pass way” (Gregory 1926: 11). It was likely the same piece of property where AJ Dorsey, ruled as a squatter by Blount County in 1900, once lived (Grigg 1911: 41). Though the cabin was called the Dorsey Place Possession, Gregory’s records indicate the building he recorded in 1926 was built by Cal Ledbetter around 1915, indicating that the Dorsey cabin had been destroyed and then later rebuilt. The possession Ledbetter rented from 1915 to 1922 did not have a set acreage associated with it. This description also indicates Ledbetter’s improvement of the property via the construction of a cabin and cultivation of the land was more legal than Dorsey’s because of the lease from the lumber company. The possession’s name is interesting because Dorsey’s name was still attached to the place even though the courts had removed him from the land. Even after Dorsey left and his cabin was destroyed, his name remained attached to a specific spot that Andy Gregory – a local man – named in a deposition describing LRLC possessory cabins. Andy Gregory’s descriptions, while written for the lumber company, reflected a local way of conceiving of the landscape, one that mirrored Dunn’s description of local maps as being comprised of seemingly insignificant details about the landscape. Gregory’s conception of the landscape, while nominally in-line with LRLC’s understanding of the Smokies, also follows the more local practice of attaching the names of families or individuals to places outside the constraints of formalized ownership.

Gregory described Cabin Number 39 as “a logging camp about 1904 and later” until Bart Ledbetter “built a house and barn and cleared about 8 acres of land”

and lived there from about 1917 to 1922 when George Seaton took over the possession (Gregory 1926: 11). The logging camp was probably an LRLC camp, as the company logged the area around the West Prong of the Little River from 1902 to 1906. Gregory does not indicate whether Ledbetter leased the land from LRLC, but its appearance on the list of possessory cabins indicates that, despite having finished timbering on the West Prong, the company was still interested in holding onto the Anderson Tract. Numbers 26 and 53, The Stocking Hollow Improvement and Meyers Cabin, respectively, were both used to store camping supplies (Gregory 1926: 11-12). The Meyers Cabin is another example of the name of a local family being associated with a lumber company possession cabin. Stocking Hollow had one acre of land associated with it, and Gregory did not specify the acreage associated with the Meyers Cabin. Both would have had minor cultivation associated with them to meet the bare minimum of the legal requirements for possession.

The cabin that might be Number 42 was also under lease from LRLC, and a cabin was erected on the lot in 1915. Gregory mentions actual possession in his description of the cabin on the Anderson Tract, but the context of this phrase is illegible. The Cabin Number 42 on the Caldwell Tract consisted of “a house and 10 or 12 acres of very old cleared land in 1917” (Gregory 1926: 9). It was also along a public pass way. Moore resided on the possession until about 1922.

The five cabins demonstrate the two primary uses for LRLC’s possessory cabins. Andy Gregory’s deposition is detailed in that respect, and it is easy to deduce which cabins were likely for camping supplies versus peoples’ homes based on the acreage. Many of the supply cabins were associated with one acre or less of

cultivated land because Gregory and his associates probably would not have had the time or desire to maintain full gardens at upwards of seventeen cabins. However, it is difficult to tell which cabins on park record are which cabins in Gregory's deposition because he does not describe them outside of their purpose and the acreage. Even then, he does not consistently associate cabins with acreage or purpose. Additionally, the Park documentation of one of the extant cabins, which I designate as Cabin A, does not match with Gregory's description of any of the Anderson Tract cabins.

Kreusch offered a history of Cabin A in the site survey report that names it as the Shade Tipton Cabin. Cabin A in Park records was still a possessory Cabin, but it was owned by one Gibson Tipton and occupied by Shade Tipton and his wife from about 1915 to 1928 (2009: 2185). The site report also indicates that due to confusion regarding the chain of title records and the fact that "acquisition maps were somewhat skewed when georeferencing and projecting them into a Geographic Information System" (Kreusch 2009: 2185), one named tract might be a different tract entirely. Acquisition maps indicate the cabin "falls within lands owned by the Little River Lumber Company," but, Dr. Randolph Shields' – a native of Cades Cove – memory places the cabin on privately-owned land (Kreusch 2009: 2185). The cabin Shields remembered in this NPS report is neither noted in Gregory's deposition or visible on the LRLC Map. It is possible, though that the possession in question was too small for the LRLC mapmaker to note, but Will Walker's land is marked, and Kreusch's report states that the Shade Tipton Cabin was an LRLC possessory cabin. The physical location of Cabin A, as marked in the site report

places it firmly within the bounds of the Anderson Tract as indicated on the LRLC Map and the Wilson Map. There is also a Tipton Tract on the LRLC Map, but it was on the west end of Dry Valley, a good distance from the Anderson Tract. The Tipton Tract had one possessory cabin on it, but Gregory called it the Shell Branch possession. It was constructed around 1915, which fits with Shields' memory in the site report. This clear contradiction between local memory as filtered through NPS and LRLC's documents reinforces my above arguments about the haphazard nature of tract bounds and the possibility that LRLC was willing to ignore or discredit other sets of deeds if they did not fit with the company's desired narrative. As noted in the site report, the tenuous links between deeds, the incorrect notation of tract names, and other issues may mean that the "true identity of [this] structure might never be known" (Kreusch 2009: 2185).

While it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine exactly which extant cabin is which, a few inferences can be made based on the physical remains at each site. Cabin A is the most complete of the two possessory cabins (Fig. 16). The base of the chimney is still intact and measures 90 cm high in the northeast corner. It is made of dry-stacked stone, which is common for the area. The southern and western foundation walls are also still partially visible. We found possible evidence of the other two foundation walls by probing the soil around the chimney. The foundation we recorded is trapezoidal, with the southern wall being almost two meters longer than the northern one. However, the surrounding topography may not have allowed a perfectly rectangular structure, as a hill rises near the back of the

| Number | Cabin Name | Date Constructed | Acres | Inhabitants | On a Public Pass-way? | Date Abandoned | Date Destroyed |
|--------|---|----------------------------|-------|---|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 26 | Stocking Hollow Improvement | Noted by Andy Gregory 1917 | 1 | Camping Supplies | | 1924 | |
| 38 | Dorsey Place Possession | c. 1915 | | Cal Ledbetter – built house | Yes | 1924 | |
| 39 | Bart Ledbetter/ George Seaton Place | 1904/1917 | 8 | Bart Ledbetter – built house, George Seaton | | | |
| 42 [?] | [Illeg.] Possession | 1915 | | | | | |
| 53 | Meyers Cabin | 1917 | | Camping Supplies | | | 1923 – burned |
| | | | | | | | |
| 42 | Harrison Moore Improvement – Caldwell Tract | Noted by Andy Gregory 1917 | 10-12 | Harrison Moore | | 1922 | |

TABLE 6: Possessory Cabins on the Anderson Tract, as recorded by Andy Gregory, 1926.

cabin. The site report described two depressions in the “center of each end of the structure” (Kreusch 2009: 2185) which were visible when I visited the site. “One shovel test was placed in the center of the northernmost depression” in the original survey and did not recover any materials (Kreusch 2009: 2185). No artifacts were visible on the ground surface. Cabin A’s position, nestled between the river and a steep incline, may rule it out as Number 39, which was associated with eight acres of land. Given its proximity to Cades Cove, it might be Number 38, located on a public pass way. However, a photograph (Fig. 17) of a contemporary Champion Fiber Company possession cabin shows that the cabins that stored camping



FIGURE 16. Possessory Cabin A on the Anderson Tract. (Photo by author, 2019.)

supplies did not have chimneys, which may rule out the latter two cabins in Gregory's deposition. While it is possible that the cabins saw varied usage, some of them, according to Gregory, fulfilled a single purpose for a longer period. Numbers 38 and 39, for example, were rented and occupied for seven and five years, respectively (Gregory 1926: 11). Gregory does, however, state that Number 38 was "cultivated after 1922 under written leases" without listing an occupant name, so its purpose may have changed after Ledbetter moved out (Gregory 1926: 11).

Unlike Cabin A, the physical remains of Cabin B on the landscape are not as immediately apparent. All that remains of this structure is part of the dry-stacked stone chimney which measures 20 centimeters high and is partially tumbled into the trail due to human and animal activity (Kreusch 2009: 2189). Stone scattered around the site likely came from the chimney. We were unable to find any indication of the foundation by probing, and no corners or walls were visible aboveground. There were undecorated whiteware sherds associated with Cabin B, the largest no bigger than a centimeter (Fig. 18). We did not locate any rim pieces, and all were flat, so they were probably from a plate. It was impossible to tell if they had been part of the same item or from many items because they had been well-trampled. The site report also noted the whiteware fragments and stated that "cultural materials appeared to be limited to the surface" (Kreusch 2009: 2185). The land surrounding the cabin was fairly level in a few places with few large trees and lots of grass which indicates it was cleared recently. The identity and purpose of Cabin B are difficult to determine from the site itself. Like Cabin A, it is adjacent to a hiking trail, which might mean it

was on a public pass way in the past. The extent to which the surrounding land had been cleared might mean it was the logging camp. Because of the ceramics, I lean towards Cabin B as a habitation site rather than one of the storage cabins, but as was the case with Cabin A, it is hard to say anything for certain.

The cabins represent one of the few instances of the Park acknowledging the timber industry as well as LRLC's adaptation to local conditions. In building the cabins, Townsend used a law of which others had taken advantage. He recognized mere legal title to the land was not sufficient proof of ownership in the courts, as they had not always looked favorably on absentee landowners in the past. This tactic seems to have worked, as challenges to Little River Lumber Company's possession of the land faltered in the court system. Legal battles still dragged on and were constantly appealed – one lawsuit filed by WM Meyers and Will Walker dragged on for five years before it was settled – but Townsend could prove and maintain legal possession of the land. As for the cabins themselves, deeper dives into local archives and local histories may uncover more clues as to where these possessory cabins were, which might help to identify future sites for archaeological work. Though many cabins existed to the bare minimum of the law's requirements, others were home sites and would potentially offer clues as to the day-to-day lives of people inhabiting this evolving landscape and working for Little River Lumber Company. While Kreusch's report reveals that some work has been done on the two possessory cabins, I argue they represent more than just some cabin foundations and more archaeological work in their vicinity should be done.



FIGURE 17. Possessory Cabin circa 1935, Great Smoky Mountains National Park. (Courtesy National Park Service.)



FIGURE 18. Ceramic sherd from Possessory Cabin B in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. (Photo by author, 2019.)

The possessory cabins demonstrate the continuing need for companies to solidify and demonstrate their ownership of land that was portrayed on maps like the LRLC and Wilson Maps as empty. Local ownership of the landscape, as understood through the laws of adverse possession, was minimized in legal documents and in the companies' and governments' understandings of how ownership of the Smokies worked. Any "improvements" made by locals on the land they obtained through adverse possession are not described in court documents. These documents that discuss the area from an outsider perspective, depict the Smoky Mountains as a block of easily tradeable land except for a few cases. The absence of description, even in Andy Gregory's deposition, is telling about outside views of the region. Instead, such documents and commercial maps commodify the landscape and depict it as empty, making it easier to trade it and exploit the region's natural resources.

Chapter 7: Local Workers and Outside Goods

Thus far, much of the archaeological remains of Little River Lumber Company have pointed to the corporation's activities. Much of my historiography, while incorporating individual locals who opposed the company regarding property and land ownership, has not involved the individuals who were on the ground, building the infrastructure needed for the company to function and operating the machinery needed to clear-cut the watershed of the Little River. But considering the impact of the lumber company on local families as well as the way workers were caught up in the drama of the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, it follows that LRLC workers are as present in the archaeology of the National Park as the lumber company itself. From the company's first appearance to the founding of the Park, workers' lives became entangled with LRLC and all its presence entailed, and their things reflect the changes engendered by the company.

In contrast to other Appalachian industries, such as coal or textiles, LRLC employees were primarily of local origin. The term "local" in this context has several definitions. For my purposes, I consider a "local" to be someone who comes from Blount or Sevier County, especially if their family entered the region in the early 19th century because they were established in the area by the 20th century. Many men on the existing lumber company payrolls had surnames that connected them to families that had been in Blount and Sevier Counties for several generations and are often still in Blount and Sevier Counties. For LRLC employees, though, "local" described even tighter geographical circles. In a 1976 interview, Earnest Ogle and P Audley Whaley noted that, to people from Greenbrier and pre-LRLC Elkmont, people

from Gatlinburg and Sevierville were considered “foreign” (Whaley, Ogle, et al. 1976: 25). Mountain communities nested within larger county-centric communities were insular, and this is reflected in LRLC documents. Based on census data alone, it is difficult to tell who was local in Ogle and Whaley’s definition. But based on my definition of local, there is a low number of immigrants and non-locals on LRLC payrolls from 1923-1934. Where one would expect to see a greater diversity of people in the region working for Little River Lumber Company, there is not.

This local-worker phenomenon contrasts with a pattern seen elsewhere in Appalachia in the 19th and 20th centuries. States like West Virginia focused their resources on attracting “immigrant workmen from Italy and Hungary, as well as share-croppers from the deep South” (Batteau 1990: 103-104) to the timber and coal industries. Batteau notes that West Virginia’s government, as well as the “state’s elite, tied by kinship and patronage to the populace, yet sufficiently ambitious that they would sell anything” (Batteau 1990: 103) were eager to attract industry and investment. This resulted in a situation where two parties – mountaineers and a growing immigrant population – met and often clashed. West Virginia is a notable example, but the pattern exists as a general trend in the Appalachian states in the years following the Civil War wherein state governments tried to attract immigrants to work in the region.

“State authorities established immigration bureaus and dispatched agents to New York and Europe to spread the word of southern opportunities. Exhibitions of state resources were creatively displayed at commercial conventions throughout America and Europe, and by the turn of the century geological surveys were being commissioned to detail the extent of the states’ mineral wealth for the benefit of potential buyers” (Eller 1982: 46).

State governments had long been aware of the wealth of largely unexploited natural resources in Appalachia and were eager to exploit them in the turmoil following the Civil War.

Migrant workers were no strangers to the timber industry at large. In the Shevlin-Hixon Company in Oregon, for example, 40 percent of workers in the company had immigrated to Oregon from elsewhere to pursue subsistence agriculture but found themselves in the timber or railroad industry (Gregory 2001: 33). Europeans built railroads in Oregon starting around 1911 and integrated into the timber industry after the tracks were built. Other workers who migrated to Oregon followed the timber industry itself from other places in the United States. One company that moved from the Great Lakes region to central Oregon brought “some 1,000 lumberjacks” with it by one estimate (Gregory 2001: 39). The timber industry in West Virginia was much more locally-based than in companies out west (Lewis 1998: 161). However, several companies operating in West Virginia sought out immigrant labor whom they could pay less than local workers (Lewis 1998: 168). Italians were popular hires in West Virginia around the turn of the century because there were more of them immigrating, though some companies preferred to hire Austrians for their dispositions (Lewis 1998: 170). In north Florida, convicts were a popular choice due to low wages (Drobney 1997: 158).

Little River Lumber company contrasted patterns in the timber industry at large and in Appalachia. The company does not appear to have attracted many workers from outside the immediate area. Most of the employees on payrolls from the decade before the National Park was established were from Blount and Sevier

County families, and a large percentage of those were often from Smoky Mountain communities. Robert V Woodruff, a foreman for LRLC, had 221 men on his payrolls from 1923-1934. Of those 221 men, 89 are locals in the strict definition of Whaley and Ogle with family histories dating back to the earliest settlers in the Smoky Mountains. Of those 89 men, 13 are Ogles, 10 are Ownbys, and eight are Partons. Ogles and Ownbys are two of the three original white settler families in Gatlinburg, and the Partons were well-established in the area by the late 19th century. Other prominent local families represented on the LRLC payroll were the McCarters, Huskeys, Olivers, Profitts, and Tiptons. These families still live in the region. In total, 40% of Little River Lumber Company workers in the 1920s were strict locals, with an additional 25 men, or 11% of all workers, likely coming from Blount or Sevier County, as their surnames are all on the 1840 and 1880 censuses. Many of these families, like the Rayfields and Shults and Dunns, also still live in the area. Taking this phenomenon into account, the number of locals working for LRLC rises to over 80% of the total employees. Other people on Woodruff's logs, such as the Copes and Nolands, were from North Carolina. Woodruff himself was from Oconaluftee (Bush 1992: 5), and his wife's family, the Maples, lived in Sevier County (Bush 1992: 37). This places them in the realm of "local," in a broader sense than my definition, as they were from the Smokies, even if they were not from East Tennessee.

Oddly, no names on the surviving LRLC books match any names on the 1924 Baker Roll, so it does not seem like any Cherokee crossed the mountains to work for Little River Lumber Company, at least not under Woodruff. Nor do any sources mention African Americans in the company, unlike in operations on Hazel Creek,

where a community of African Americans worked for Ritter Lumber Company (Pierce 2017: 58). As for immigrants, a few local informants mentioned Europeans working for LRLC. One Jess Cole recalled a “Vic Olson, the Swede who ran the loader” for LRLC at one point (Weals 1991: 109). Dorie Cope noted that her mother boarded “two Germans from the Alleghenies” when the Woodruffs lived at Elkmont (Bush 1992: 90-91). She does not name them, while the rest of the boarders,¹⁷ local men, were identified (Bush 1992:90).

The fact that LRLC employees were primarily of local origin points to local economic and social conditions that would have attracted subsistence farmers to wage work. Locals did not necessarily have a lot to lose by working for the lumber company. If anything, part-time work with LRLC meant supplemental income that allowed “families to live better than they would have lived without it” (Salstrom 1994: 53). Cash wages allowed locals to maintain if not improve existing standards of living without having to emigrate. Local workers meant existing communities could continue existing and locals could return to their farms in the event of slow economic periods or a lull in LRLC’s activities. Paul Salstrom argued that part-time work allowed subsistence agriculture to continue longer than it did in areas where farmers completely switched over to wage work. Part-time workers occupied the middle ground between “full-time farmers [who] were generally growing poorer” and full-time

¹⁷ Perhaps worth noting that the men Mrs. Woodruff boarded are not on her husband’s books, which would indicate they either were not timber cutters or there was more than one crew up at Elkmont.

miners who were “likewise destined to grow poorer” in West Virginia (Salstrom 1994: 53).

Worker mobility and flexibility was especially useful given the seasonal nature of the timber industry. For workers in the Pacific Northwest, the industry’s seasonality kept them in perpetual motion, and many faced “frequent layoffs during slow economic periods and bad weather” (Loomis 2016: 23). One estimate stated that the timber industry “needed 50 percent fewer laborers during the winter” (Loomis 2016: 24). Seasonal unemployment meant that “masses of unemployed loggers descended upon the cities. A 1914 study of the unemployed in Portland estimated that loggers were unemployed 130 days a year (Loomis 2016: 24). Florida timber workers do not seem to have been employed on a seasonal basis, but they were paid “on a piece-work basis” (Drobney 1997: 85) and had no set hours and worked from anywhere between four to twenty-seven days in a month (Drobney 1997: 123).

I have yet to see any evidence East Tennessee men “descended” upon surrounding towns in the off-season, and this may be related to the fact that so many of them were local. Additionally, year-round employment through LRLC existed. Isaac Bradley recalled that the company would cut trees in the winter and remove them in the summer (Parton, Bradley, et al. 1958: 15). Woodruff’s payroll records confirm year-round activity, as well, because his books do not show big fluctuations in the numbers of men working under him from month-to-month. Of the 221 men under him between 1923-1934, an average of thirteen men was on the monthly payroll at a time. There are not any significant spikes in the numbers of workers from

season to season across the ten years Woodruff was foreman. The model followed by Floridian timber companies seems to fit better here, as men appear on the payrolls sporadically.

LRLC workers also seem to have worked long-term for the company. One Dallas Ogle, for example, appeared in nearly every monthly record for a decade. John Parton worked for LRLC for twenty-five years. He started with railroad work and shifted to timber cutting once the railroad got to Elkmont (Parton, Bradley, et al. 1958: 4). Isaac Bradley, worked for the company for fourteen years, building camps and operating overhead skidders (Parton, Bradley, et al. 1958: 14). They changed positions within the organization as needed, becoming skilled laborers on their own. It also seems like local men could achieve high positions in the organization as well. While Ritter Lumber Company in North Carolina “had to import most of their skilled labor” like foremen, sawyers, and millwrights (Pierce 2017: 57), Townsend filled several skilled positions from available workers. Robert Woodruff, for example, worked his way up to foreman (Bush 1992: 114). And, as mentioned above, many men, such as Wiley Oakley, transitioned into the tourism industry in the 1920s (Clabo et al. 2004: 7).

For some locals, movement between companies was also possible and important as wages changed and better job opportunities appeared. Louis McCarter, the Champion Fiber Company caretaker, also did contract work for LRLC, worked for a businessman in Gatlinburg, and worked for Three M Lumber Company out of Smokemont in North Carolina. This was common practice in the Pacific Northwest, where lumberjacks were often single. Timber companies in Florida also sought out

single men with no local connections (Drobney 1997: 84). In North Carolina, single men known as “logging tramps” with “no folks or anything” (Wiggington 1977: 304) often moved between companies. One informant in Foxfire Volume Four reported that logging tramps in North Carolina “never drew [their] pay” and were therefore never short on money because, by the time they finished their rounds of the different companies, they always had a paycheck waiting for them (Wiggington 1977: 304). Workers like this were “experts in every area” of the industry, which made them valuable employees (Wiggington 1977: 306). Some LRLC men like John Parton did this, and the vertical integration of Townsend’s operation meant there was always something to do within LRLC. Additionally, unlike the Pacific Northwest workers, most LRLC workers had local family ties, which meant they did not have to be mobile if they did not want to be mobile. While seasonal employment affected workers, Townsend’s employees did not have to leave the area to find work elsewhere between seasons. Many people could go back to their farms and families – who were usually not more than fifty miles away (Dunn 1988: 74). They had a safety net that immigrant or itinerant workers in West Virginia or the Pacific Northwest did not.

Farming remained an important safety net for LRLC workers. While the work in the timber industry was dangerous, the pay was not great. P Audley Whaley and Earnest Ogle estimated Little River Lumber Company “paid ‘bout 20 cents an hour” and that while “they didn’t pay much . . . it [was] awful good money” (Whaley, Ogle, et al. 1976: 30). Weals, in his history of Elkmont, estimated that a day’s work in the woods paid \$1.25 and work on a log train paid \$2.50 a day (Weals 1991: 7).

Constructing the railroad paid fifty cents a day for ten-hour days in 1907 (Weals 1991: 25). Woodruff's time books show set rates of pay that determine how much workers got for a week of work, based on position. Rates of pay were variable and low for the dangerous nature of the work these men were doing. P Audley Whaley was right when he said the company did not pay much.

Little River Lumber Company does not seem to have used scrip. Given the mobility of the locals and the sporadic nature of employment, scrip would not have made much sense. Grace Price Maples, whose father was an LRLC cook at Elkmont, recalled that her family charged an account at the company store and "paid for [supplies] when you got paid" (Maples and Price 2006: 12). The Prices also grew much of their food in a garden adjacent to their house. There were company stores at the LRLC camp towns of Elkmont, Tremont, and Fish Camp. Myrtle Cogdill Teaster's account of life at Elkmont indicates company stores accepted standard currency, as her family bought goods from the commissary store even though her father did not work for the company at the time (2003: 18).

Household Goods

The cash earned from LRLC work was invested in items like clothes and shoes as well as the glass and ceramics noted during fieldwork. While the arrival of industry did not necessarily entail the arrival of modernity, as Kephart described it, it did mean increased exposure and opportunities for mountain families to buy manufactured goods. Access to railroads also meant people could shop for themselves in towns like Maryville, Knoxville, or Sevierville. Goods also came to the

Smokies: “peddlers with all kinds of merchandise rode the train into the lumber camps” (Bush 1992: 104). Such access would have meant an increase in the variety and amount of mass-produced goods in local households, a change that should be visible in the archaeological record. Investigation of homesites in the Smokies beyond my pedestrian survey might show a distinct shift in the material culture of local households at the time the lumber companies arrived.

Wages were likely reinvested in the workers, first and foremost. Our pedestrian survey turned up evidence of men’s clothes in a couple of different locations. We found a metal belt buckle at one potential habitation site about six miles up the mountain from Elkmont. We did not note any identifying marks on the buckle that could offer clues as to its origins, so its age is difficult to determine. It was, however, at a junction of two railroad lines and associated with two eight-centimeter cut nails, and a metal pipe about three centimeters in diameter. Future archaeological survey in this area may turn up more signs of habitation.

We also found leather goods at Elkmont. In one wet-weather creek, we found two strips of leather, each about four centimeters wide. One piece was ten centimeters long and rounded on one end while the other end had sharp corners. The second piece was about 23 centimeters long and was also rounded on one end while the other end was jagged. The longer piece of leather had a series of perforated holes running down the long center axis, indicating it was likely a piece of a belt or a different kind of strap. In that same creek, we also found the heel portion of a shoe sole well as the heel, toe, and leather upper of another shoe. Both were likely from work boots based on the thickness of the heels and the shape of the

leather upper. The soles were black and rubberized and had rusted holes in them from where the nails had once been. The upper was in good condition, as well, and still had intact stitching. Each heel had a hollow in the center with “Made in USA” and an illegible serial number in the center (Fig. 19). “Goodyear T&R” was stamped underneath this hollow. Goodyear Tire and Rubber first produced rubber heels and soles for work boots in 1905 (Goodyear Footwear 2020), so the shoes post-date 1905.

While it is possible the belt and other pieces of leather had been worked and crafted into objects by local people, the mass-produced leather boots indicate the established connection between the people of the Smokies and places outside Appalachia. Whether bought in-person in Knoxville or Maryville or obtained through the mail, someone needed and bought a pair of work boots. Boots like these would have been important to loggers to protect their feet and would have been important to locals in general for movement over rough ground and in the woods. Their presence also very much contradicts the popular image of a barefoot mountaineer.

While the leather boots can be interpreted as the evidence of a timber worker, artifacts that we interpreted to be household goods accounted for 49.6% of the total artifacts we tagged over the course of our pedestrian survey. The largest portions of household goods are of glass (40% of household artifacts, 20% of total artifacts) and ceramic (48% of household artifacts, 25% of total artifacts) sherds of varying size and condition. The ceramics found near Cabin B, for example, were too small to identify as anything other than whiteware. Ceramics in Elkmont, however, tended to be much larger, more complete, and exhibited greater variety in terms of visible



FIGURE 19. Heel portion of sole from Goodyear work boot. (Photo by author, 2019.)

design. One trash pit in Elkmont, for example, produced a pitcher spout, half a teacup, and other decorated ceramic sherds. However, as this deposit was located within the Elkmont Historic District, near a grouping of vacation homes called “Millionaire’s Row,” the deposit may be related to the vacationers rather than those employed by Little River Lumber Company.

While household goods were found at nearly all potential habitation sites, the greatest concentrations, such as the trash pit, came from Elkmont. And aside from the trash pit, most of the Elkmont artifacts were in the probable location of the

logging town of Elkmont. A 2005 report on the archaeological survey of the Elkmont Historic District mentions the potential location of the former logging town of Elkmont. The land in question was not included in the 2005 survey because it fell outside the “areas that may be affected by ground-disturbing activities” (Webb and Benyshek et al. 2005: 37) proposed for the Elkmont Historic District. Additionally, the site does not fall within the bounds of the Historic District¹⁸ itself (Webb and Benyshek et al. 2005: 37).

Wet-weather creeks crisscrossing the area presented a wealth of surface artifacts. Presumably, the intermittent erosion and re-deposition of soil have kept these artifacts uncovered since their deposition in at least the 1930s, but the fact that a lot of these artifacts were in wet-weather creeks or in the water itself also means their deposition may not be the original depositional context. The possible town was where we found the boots and belt. We also located a possible house site and stone wall remnants. Here were the greatest numbers of glass (17% of household artifacts, 9% of total artifacts) and ceramic (20% of household artifacts, 11% of total artifacts) artifacts. We found two complete bottles and large pieces of other jars and containers, both rim portions and bases.

One of the complete bottles was an amber glass, cork-stoppered, medicinal bottle. It had “2 ½ oz.” embossed on the neck and a serial number on the base. Because it is a machine-made bottle with volume information, it post-dates 1913

¹⁸ The bounds of the Elkmont Historic District do not make sense anyway. They are irregular, seem constrained by geography, and appear to have been limited strictly to the 20th century-resort which, if true, very much reinforces my point about intentional forgetting.

(Lindsey 2020: “Machine-Made Bottles”). The bottom of the bottle is smooth and has no stippling, which means it was made before 1940 (Lindsey 2020: “Machine-Made Bottles”). Unfortunately, there were no other marks on this bottle, so I cannot narrow the date down further. While the medicine bottle has a wide date range, “the adoption of industry-wide standards for external thread finishes and metal screw cap closures between 1919 and 1924 spelled the end of cork as the dominant closure type” (Lindsey 2020: “Types of Bottle Closures”). This makes the three cork-stoppered closures we discovered over the course of fieldwork more significant, though the true impact of continuous thread closures may be exaggerated (Bender 2016: 52).

The other complete bottle from Elkmont was a clear glass Castoria bottle (Fig. 20). This bottle had a narrow neck and threaded rim and was shaped like a rectangular prism. On one of the narrow sides of the bottle, the word “Castoria” was embossed (Fig. 21). The opposite side had the words “Chas H Fletcher.” Castoria is a patent medicine that was invented by Dr. Samuel Pitcher around 1867 (Lockhart et al. 2014: 1), though it was not named “Castoria” until 1883 (Lockhart et al. 2014: 2-3). Charles H Fletcher became the president of the company in 1888 and his name started appearing on Castoria labels and bottles. around 1910 (Lockhart et al. 2014: 19-20). The Elkmont bottle was likely machine-made sometime in the 1930s because it only had “USA” embossed on the bottom and the Fletcher-signature logo lacked the apostrophe (Lockhart et al. 2014: 25).

The other glass artifacts from Elkmont did not have helpful identifying marks. We found only eight pieces of glass that had enough of a neck to identify the closing

mechanism used. Five used an external screw finish which was popularized by mason jars, which were invented in 1858 (Bender 2016: 52). The single-thread screw cap in most glass containers today was first patented in 1922 (Bender 2016: 52).

In addition to the glass, we also noted many ceramic sherds of varying sizes and shapes at Elkmont. Two teacup halves, both undecorated, and a portion of a plate decorated with a green rim (Fig. 22) were tagged in one wet-weather creek. Upstream from the plate, another partial cup and plate piece were noted. Both had a floral pattern. The latter ceramics were associated with the potential house site which consisted of the stone pile about one square meter in size and twenty centimeters tall, what appeared to be the bottom layer of a dry-stacked stone wall, several metal sheets, and a single brick. This may have been the homesite of a John Huskey. A map in the Garrow report noted a structure in the vicinity and attached Huskey's name to it. It was constructed sometime after 1880 and was destroyed between 1933 and 1942 (Webb and Benyshek et al. 2005: 20, 29).

Most of the logging at Elkmont occurred between 1908 and 1925, meaning LRLC was likely finished there when the Castoria bottle was deposited. However, all the household goods noted still signify the people who inhabited the area. It is likely any given good, boots and belt included, could be artifacts from loggers, a vacationer across the river, or from a family that lived in Elkmont after the lumber company stopped cutting timber. It is difficult to determine based on artifact location alone. There is a possibility of a material connection between the resort town of Elkmont and the logging town of Elkmont like the one Horning describes between



FIGURE 20. Clear glass Castoria bottle in wet-weather creek, Elkmont. (Photo by author, 2019.)

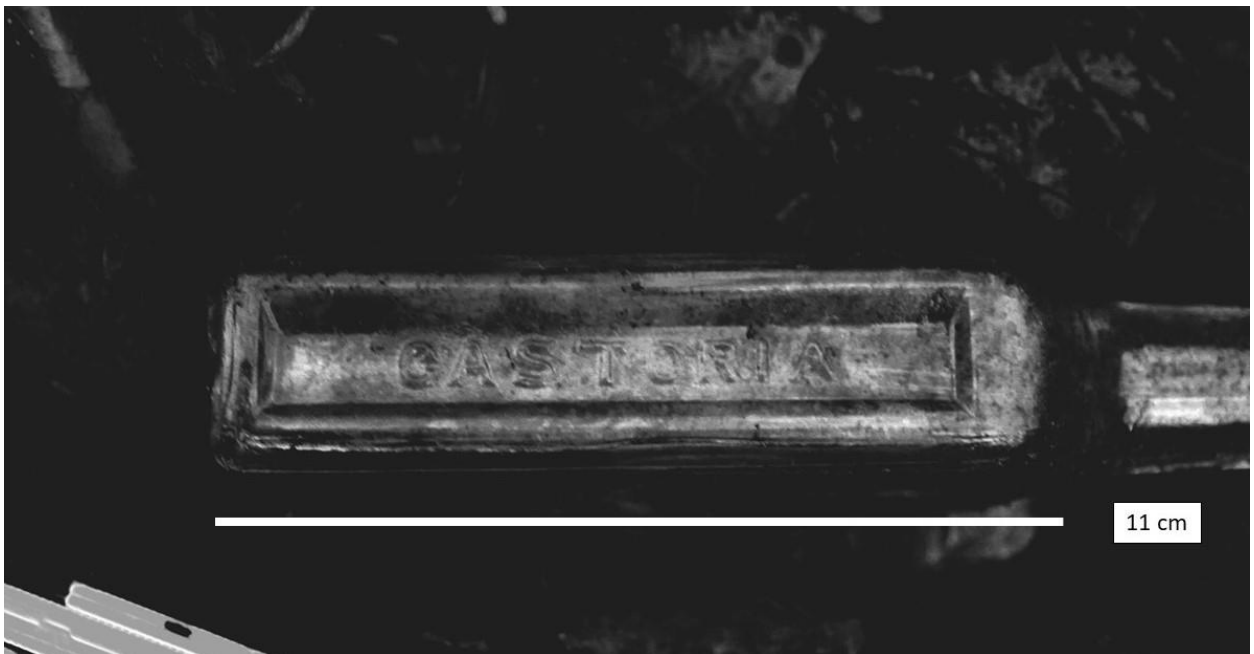


FIGURE 21. Side of Castoria bottle from wet-weather creek. (Photo by author, 2019.)



FIGURE 22. Portion of plate with green rim from wet-weather creek, Elkmont. (Photo by author, 2019.)

Skyland Resort and communities living in Corbin Hollow.

“Ceramics found on Corbin Hollow sites closely match many of the varieties in use at the resort, with an emphasis upon bulk-produced hotel, restaurant, and railroad wares. Residents most likely purchased these items through Pollock [the resort owner], either secondhand or via his orders for Skyland. . . . [T]he notoriously cash-impaired Pollock may have [also] paid his employees with items such as tableware” (Horning 2004: 64).

It is not outside of the realm of possibility that a similar situation may have occurred at Elkmont. Given the physical proximity LRLC workers and vacationers it is possible some overlap in material goods occurred between the two populations.

The area around Tremont also produced glass (19% of household artifacts, 8% of total artifacts) and ceramics (7% of household artifacts, 4% of total artifacts). As was the case at Cabin B, most of Tremont glass and ceramics were broken into small, unidentifiable pieces. We did not note any ceramics with decorations; all seem to have been whiteware. The glass was more variable, though much of it was clear glass. We noted five pieces of thin, flat glass that we interpreted as paned glass. We found one clear glass bottle without a threaded finish and several curved pieces of glass that may have come from other containers. One small (less than 1 centimeter) shard of blue glass was found in a coal scatter near the river in Tremont settlement.

Artifacts like the Castoria bottle and the different types of ceramics and glass at both Elkmont and Tremont point to a proliferation of household goods in LRLC camps, demonstrating connections to the outside world and local interest in purchasing the goods. They also emphasize the fact that these camps were people's homes and that LRLC camps were communities. Such communities were dismantled in the 1930s, as LRLC pulled out of the area and the National Park Service and CCC transformed the landscape into one that forgot the people. The commodification of nature through the logging industry's activities made it easier to justify rhetoric that the mountaineers harmed the landscape which, in turn, made it easier to remove them. This narrative was perpetuated by works such as *Our Southern Highlanders* which painted the region as one where people were uninterested in the outside world, outside industries, and manufactured goods.

The absence of the people from the GRSM landscape post-1934 might fit into the idea that the Park is a space for leisure and not daily life, but the presence of

household and industrial goods points to the inherent complexity of this place. The top-down narrative of the self-sufficient, backward hillbilly no longer fits when considering the archaeology of the timber industry. Different groups of people interacted with the environment and constructed and maintained different ideas of what the Smokies meant as a place through their day-to-day interactions. The way written accounts are divorced from the artifacts in the woods points to the continued divide between local knowledge and narratives and the understanding of the same landscape by NPS and visitors. The ruins of the timber industry and the ruins of the communities that were re-structured by and around it still hold power and meaning for locals, even though they are covered in layers of rust, dirt, conflicting narratives, and intentional forgetting.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

The documentary and artifactual records that surround the Great Smoky Mountains National Park paint a different picture of the Smokies than the one offered to tourists. This is not a pristine wilderness, rather it is the result of a series of human choices and interventions over the course of centuries. In 1934, the Park existed at an intersection of Romantic ideals concerning nature as a thing to be experienced and Capitalist ideals that valued resource extraction over conservation. Either way, the commodification of nature was at play, and the region is commodified in these ways today.

These larger phenomena often conceal the humans who inhabited the land, cut the trees, and were removed from their homes to create the present-day people-less wilderness. The specter of the hillbilly looms large in Appalachia, and though it has resulted in financial gain for some, it continues to be a source of stigma when a person from Appalachia leaves the region. This stereotype began as a way for governments and corporations to assert control and power over the region and continues to be popular today. Mountaintop removal is still a reality for people elsewhere in Appalachia, and the encroachment of increasingly developed towns on the borders of the GRSM threatens the existing island of wilderness as the timber corporations did 100 years ago. Acknowledging the forgotten history of the timber industry forces a reconsideration of Appalachia's place in the United States beyond its stereotypes. Continuing to separate local knowledge from NPS interpretation is doing neither locals nor the Park Service any good. Tourist interest in the wilderness aspect of the Park seems to be declining in favor of the lights of Pigeon Forge, even

as visitor numbers continue to climb. The seeking of the Sublime within the Park is becoming the limit of the visitor experience, and, at this point, broadening interpretive focus will do more good than harm to the Park's inherent value as a place, both in terms of its biodiversity and as a heritage spot for locals.

Those who lived in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the 19th and 20th centuries were people whose lives contradicted stereotypes of Appalachia. Though they lived on and worked the landscape, they were not backward hillbillies or products of the perceived wilderness. The household artifacts that litter the park emphasize their connections to the world outside the mountains, and their presence in court records emphasizes their connection to the land they inhabited. The remains of LRLC, too, demonstrate the determination to create a well-used landscape and then the hasty transition from an inhabited, worked landscape to a wilderness. The encroachment of Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, growing vehicular traffic, and the current federal administration's determination to boost business at the expense of the environment point to the delicacy of the concept of wilderness in the first place.

What is more, the archaeological resources we did discover during fieldwork are themselves in danger. We could not remove anything from the Park, so everything is still on the ground, in the woods somewhere. The objects are therefore still subject to natural processes, trampling from visitors, and possibly illegal collection. The axle in Tremont, for example, disappeared between July and December 2019. I could not find it anywhere near the recorded GPS point. It may have been rolled into the river by a visitor, but it is also possible it was taken. While there is value to keeping these items on the landscape as reminders that the Park

was once inhabited, they are also without interpretation and, therefore, without any sense of importance. My preliminary survey demonstrates that there are many potential archaeological sites in the park, often with artifacts on the surface and in delicate condition. In the past, GRSM has been prized by the United States, the National Park Service, and UNESCO for its ecological complexity. The same attention should be accorded to its complex human history.

Moving forward, an archaeological study of the GRSM should focus on recording these artifacts, pulling old research notes and site reports out of the archives, and affording the things in the woods at least some of the same level of interpretation offered to the cabins at Cades Cove and Daisy Town. Such a project could also incorporate community engagement. As mentioned above, many of the descendants of LRLC employees live in the area. Engaging with them would be good for shaping the interpretation of the objects and the Park itself, as prescribed by community and indigenous archaeologists.

There are a lot of experienced hikers who know about potential sites hidden from NPS personnel or tourist eyes and many official volunteers who have a thorough knowledge of the region from their connections to the community and their own experiences. In not acknowledging the human history of the Park more thoroughly, their extensive knowledge is going unrecognized and unused. And, as time goes on, the knowledge may start to disappear, as many of those who hold it are retirees. The disconnect between NPS and locals both maintains the nature-culture divide predominant in the Park's larger narrative as well as the gap between

NPS and local that emerged in the 1930s with removal, which is, in turn, connected to perspectives like the work of Horace Kephart.

Further, maintaining the image of the GRSM as a pristine wilderness harms its ideological position as a place to both outsiders and NPS. As discussed above, while the idea of wilderness is valuable now, that may change in the future. As demonstrated above and in the news surrounding public lands, the fact that “wilderness” is a malleable concept means even the most ecologically or culturally valuable areas are subject to top-down valuation. Designating Bears Ears as economically valuable puts it in danger from a cultural and ecological standpoint. Reinforcing the idea that Mount Rushmore is a symbol of American democracy and any opposition to that narrative is an attempt to “wipe away the lessons of history” (Kristi Noem quoted in Groves and Superville 2020) is further testament to the importance of challenging top-down narratives at every turn. They silence the subaltern and devalue their perspectives in favor of, in these instances, capitalist, neoliberal, and nationalist narratives.

In the Smokies, an expanded archaeology of the GRSM would elevate local forms of knowledge and challenge these outsider ideas. In doing so, the landscape becomes more valuable – shoring it up against future attacks from the outside – and emplaced. In acting as an untouched wilderness, the Park is physically and mentally “marked off from the quotidian landscape by [its] unique materiality in order to concretize abstract ideals of social life (Dawdy 2016: 148). Breaking down this barrier re-incorporates the Park into quotidian life and destroys the sanctity of the wilderness as a concept. Rendering the Park a real Place again valorizes different

forms of knowledge behind top-down narratives and empowers local people to let their voices be heard beyond the tourism industry (Oliver-Smith 2010: 188).

An archaeology of the timber industry would not harm the importance of the forest that exists in the 21st century. If anything, acknowledging the timber industry would emphasize how “tangible reminders of the history of these mountains bear witness to the long history of land use in the mountains, and to the success of the Appalachians’ reversion to forest” (Gregg 2010: 214). The landscape, in this light, becomes not an empty wilderness, but a multi-use landscape. It is not static, but active, shaped and re-shaped, which emphasizes that while humans can destroy a landscape, as companies did in the 20th century, it is also possible to change that narrative. The appearance of land, its value, and land-use changes are “not inevitable” (Gregg 2010: 215). They are controlled and subject to artificial constructions that abstract nature into a commodity and flattens the complexity of the landscape.

Maintaining this view of landscape as a commodity, valuable for either its resources or its aesthetics, means that landscape and environment still exist on the margins of human thought and perpetuates the problematic nature-culture dichotomy. Leaving this construction unquestioned ignores the rampant consumer culture that results in things like clearcutting hundreds of thousands of acres of forest and the associated consequences that impact peoples’ lives. And continuing to view humans’ relationship to nature along the lines of this dichotomy with the commodification of nature thrown in for good measure was harmful in the past and is going to be harmful in the future.

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